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THE

# WORKS

OF

## THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

# EDMUND BURKE.

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RE-PRINTED FROM THE LAST LONDON EDITION.

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VOLUME I.

BOSTON:
WELLS AND LILLY—COURT STREET.
1826.

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# ADVERTISEMENT

## TO THE READER.

The late Mr. Burke, from a principle of unaffected humility, which they, who were the most intimately acquainted with his character, best know to have been in his estimation one of the most important moral duties, never himself made any collection of the various publications with which, during a period of forty years, he adorned and enriched the literature of this country. When, however, the rapid and unexampled demand for his "Reflexions on the Revolution of France," had unequivocally testified his celebrity as a writer, some of his friends so far prevailed upon him, that he permitted them to put forth a regular edition of his works. Accordingly, three volumes in quarto appeared under that title in 1792, printed for the late Mr. Dodsley. That edition, therefore, has been made the foundation of the present, for which a form has been chosen better adapted to publick convenience. Such errours of the press as have been discovered in it are here rectified; in other respects it is faithfully followed, except that in one instance, an accident of little moment has occasioned a slight deviation from the strict chronological arrangement; and that on the other hand, a speech of conspicuous excellence, on his declining the poll at Bristol, in 1780, is here, for the first time, inserted in its proper place.

As the activity of the Author's mind, and the lively interest which he took in the welfare of his country, ceased only with his life, many subsequent productions issued from his pen, which were received in a manner corresponding with his distinguished reputation. He wrote also various tracts, of a less popular description, which he designed for private circulation, in quarters where he supposed they might produce most benefit to the community; but which, with some other papers, have been printed since his death,



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from copies which he left behind him fairly transcribed, and most of them corrected as for the press. All these, now first collected together, form the contents of the last volume. They are disposed in chronological order, with the exception of the Preface to Brissot's Address, which having appeared in the Author's life-time, and from delicacy not being avowed by him, did not come within the plan of this edition, but has been placed at the end of the last volume, on its being found deficient in just bulk.

The several posthumous publications, as they from time to time made their appearance, were accompanied by appropriate prefaces. These, however, as they were principally intended for temporary purposes, have been omitted. Some few explanations only, which they contained, seem here to be necessary.

The "Observations on the Conduct of the Minority in the Session of 1793," had been written and sent by Mr. Burke as a paper entirely and strictly confidential; but it crept surreptitiously into the world, through the fraud and treachery of the man whom he had employed to transcribe it, and, as usually happens in such cases, came forth in a very mangled state, under a false title, and without the introductory letter. The friends of the Author, without waiting to consult him, instantly obtained an injunction from the Court of Chancery to stop the sale. What he himself felt, on receiving intelligence of the injury done him by one, from whom his kindness deserved a very different turn, will be best conveyed in his own words. The following is an extract of a letter to a friend, which he dictated on this subject from a sick bed:

*Bath*, 15*th Feb.* 1797.

"My dear Laurence,

"On the appearance of the advertisement, all newspapers, and all letters have been kept back from me till this time. Mrs. Burke opened your's, and finding that all the measures in the power of Dr. King, yourself, and Mr. Woodford, had been taken to suppress the publication, she ventured to deliver me the letters to-day, which were read to me in my bed, about two o'clock.

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"This affair does vex me; but I am not in a state of health at present to be deeply vexed at any thing. Whenever this matter comes into discussion, I authorize you to contradict the infamous reports, which (I am informed) have been given out; that this paper had been circulated through the Ministry, and was intended gradually to slide into the press. To the best of my recollection, I never had a clean copy of it but one, which is now in my possession; I never communicated that, but to the Duke of Portland, from whom I had it back again. But the Duke will set this matter to rights, if in reality there were two copies, and he has one. I never shewed it, as they know, to any one of the Ministry. If the Duke has really a copy, I believe his and mine are the only ones that exist, except what was taken by fraud from loose and incorrect papers by S——, to whom I gave the letter to copy. As soon as I began to suspect him capable of any such scandalous breach of trust, you know with what anxiety I got the loose papers out of his hands, not having reason to think that he kept any other. Neither do I believe in fact (unless he meditated this villainy long ago) that he did or does now possess any clean copy. I never communicated that paper to any one out of the very small circle of those private friends, from whom I concealed nothing.

"But I beg you and my friends to be cautious how you let it be understood, that I disclaim any thing but the mere act and intention of publication. I do not retract any one of the sentiments contained in that Memorial, which was and is my justification, addressed to the friends, for whose use alone I intended it. Had I designed it for the publick, I should have been more exact and full. It was written in a tone of indignation, in consequence of the resolutions of the Whig Club, which were directly pointed against myself and others, and occasioned our secession from that Club; which is the last act of my life that I shall under any circumstances repent. Many temperaments and explanations there would have been, if I had ever had a notion that it should meet the publick eye."

In the mean time a large impression, amounting, it is be-

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lieved, to three thousand copies, had been dispersed over the country. To recall these was impossible; to have expected that any acknowledged production of Mr. Burke, full of matter likely to interest the future historian, could remain for ever in obscurity, would have been folly; and to have passed it over in silent neglect, on the one hand, or, on the other, to have then made any considerable changes in it, might have seemed an abandonment of the principles which it contained. The Author, therefore, discovering that, with the exception of the introductory letter, he had not in fact kept any clean copy, as he had supposed, corrected one of the pamphlets with his own hand. From this, which was found preserved with his other papers, his friends afterwards thought it their duty to give an authentick edition.

The "Thoughts and Details on Scarcity" were originally presented in the form of a Memorial to Mr. Pitt. The Author proposed afterwards to recast the same matter in a new shape. He even advertised the intended work under the title of "Letters on Rural Œconomicks, addressed to Mr. Arthur Young;" but he seems to have finished only two or three detached fragments of the first letter. These being too imperfect to be printed alone, his friends inserted them in the Memorial, where they seemed best to cohere. The Memorial had been fairly copied, but did not appear to have been examined or corrected, as some trifling errours of the transcriber were perceptible in it. The manuscript of the fragments was a rough draft from the Author's own hand, much blotted and very confused.

The "Third Letter on the Proposals for Peace," was in its progress through the press when Mr. Burke died. About one half of it was actually revised in print by himself, though not in the exact order of the pages as they now stand. He enlarged his first draft, and separated one great member of his subject, for the purpose of introducing some other matter between. The different parcels of manuscript, designed to intervene, were discovered. One of them he seemed to have gone over himself, and to have improved and augmented. The other (fortunately the smaller), was much more imperfect, just as it was taken from his mouth

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by dictation. No important change, none at all affecting the meaning of any passage, has been made in either, though in the more imperfect parcel, some latitude of discretion in subordinate points was necessarily used.

There is, however, a considerable member, for the greater part of which, Mr. Burke's reputation is not responsible: this is the inquiry into the condition of the higher classes. The summary of the whole topick indeed, nearly as it stands, was found, together with a marginal reference to the bankrupt-list, in his own hand-writing; and the actual conclusion of the letter was dictated by him, but never received his subsequent correction. He had also preserved, as materials for this branch of the subject, some scattered hints, documents, and parts of a correspondence on the state of the country. He was, however, prevented from working on them, by the want of some authentick and official information, for which he had been long anxiously waiting, in order to ascertain, to the satisfaction of the publick, what with his usual sagacity he had fully anticipated from his own personal observation, to his own private conviction. At length the reports of the different Committees, which had been appointed by the two Houses of Parliament, amply furnished him with evidence for this purpose. Accordingly he read and considered them with attention; but for any thing beyond this the season was now past. The Supreme Disposer of all, against whose inscrutable counsels it is vain as well as impious to murmur, did not permit him to enter on the execution of the task which he meditated. It was resolved, therefore, by one of his friends, after much hesitation, and under a very painful responsibility, to make such an attempt as he could at supplying the void; especially because the insufficiency of our resources for the continuance of the war was understood to have been the principal objection urged against the two former "Letters on the Proposals for Peace." In performing with reverential diffidence this duty of friendship, care has been taken not to attribute to Mr. Burke any sentiment which is not most explicitly known, from repeated conversations, and from much correspondence, to have been decidedly entertained

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by that illustrious man. One passage of nearly three pages, containing a censure of our defensive system, is borrowed from a private letter, which he began to dictate, with an intention of comprising in it the short result of his opinions, but which he afterwards abandoned, when, a little time before his death, his health appeared in some degree to amend, and he hoped that Providence might have spared him at least to complete the larger publick letter, which he then proposed to resume.

In the preface to the former edition of this letter, a fourth was mentioned as being in possession of Mr. Burke's friends. It was in fact announced by the Author himself, in the conclusion of the second, which it was then designed to follow. He intended, he said, "to proceed next on the question of the facilities possessed by the French Republick, *from the internal state of other nations, and particularly of this*, for obtaining her ends; and, as his notions were controverted, to take notice of what, in that way, had been recommended to him." The vehicle which he had chosen for this part of his plan was an answer to a pamphlet which was supposed to come from high authority, and was circulated by Ministers with great industry, at the time of its appearance in October 1795, immediately previous to that Session of Parliament when his Majesty for the first time declared, that the appearance of any disposition in the enemy to negotiate for general peace, should not fail to be met with an earnest desire to give it the fullest and speediest effect. In truth, the answer, which is full of spirit and vivacity, was written in the latter end of the same year, but was laid aside when the question assumed a more serious aspect, from the commencement of an actual negotiation, which gave rise to the series of printed letters. Afterwards, he began to re-write it, with a view of accommodating it to his new purpose. The greater part, however, still remained in its original state; and several heroes of the Revolution, who are there celebrated, having in the interval passed off the publick stage, a greater liberty of insertion and alteration than his friends on consideration have thought allowable, would be necessary to adapt it to that place in the series for

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which it was ultimately designed by the Author. This piece, therefore, addressed, as the title originally stood, to his noble friend, Earl Fitzwilliam, will be given the first in the supplemental volumes, which will be hereafter added to complete this edition of the Author's works.

The tracts, most of them in manuscript, which have been already selected as fit for this purpose, will probably furnish four or five volumes more, to be printed uniformly with this edition. The principal piece is entitled " An Essay towards an Abridgment of the English History ;" and reaches from the earliest period down to the conclusion of the reign of King John. It is written with much depth of antiquarian research, directed by the mind of an intelligent statesman. This alone, as far as can be conjectured, will form more than one volume. Another entire volume also, at least, will be filled with his letters to publick men on publick affairs, especially those of France. This supplement will be sent to the press without delay.

Mr. Burke's more familiar correspondence will be reserved, as authorities to accompany a narrative of his life, which will conclude the whole. The period during which he flourished was one of the most memorable of our annals. It comprehended the acquisition of one empire in the east, the loss of another in the west, and the total subversion of the ancient system of Europe by the French Revolution; with all which events the history of his life is necessarily and intimately connected; as indeed it also is, much more than is generally known, with the state of literature and the elegant arts. Such a subject of biography cannot be dismissed with a slight and rapid touch; nor can it be treated in a manner worthy of it, from the information, however authentick and extensive, which the industry of any one man may have accumulated. Many important communications have been received, but some materials, which relate to the pursuits of his early years, and which are known to be in existence, have been hitherto kept back, notwithstanding repeated inquiries and applications. It is, therefore, once more earnestly requested, that all persons who call themselves the friends or admirers of the late Edmund

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Burke, will have the goodness to transmit, without delay, any notices of that, or of any other kind, which may happen to be in their possession, or within their reach, to Messrs. Rivington; a respect and kindness to his memory, which will be thankfully acknowledged by those friends to whom, in dying, he committed the sacred trust of his reputation.

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# ADVERTISEMENT

## TO THE PRESENT EDITION.

A NEW Edition of the Works of Mr. Burke having been called for by the Publick, the opportunity has been taken to make some slight changes, it is hoped for the better.

A different distribution of the contents, while it has made the volumes more nearly equal in their respective bulk, has, at the same time, been fortunately found to produce a more methodical arrangement of the whole. The first volume contains those literary and philosophical works by which Mr. Burke was known, previous to the commencement of his publick life as a statesman, and the political pieces which were written by him between the time of his first becoming connected with the Marquis of Rockingham, and his being chosen Member for Bristol. In the second are comprehended all his speeches and pamphlets from his first arrival at Bristol, as a candidate, in the year 1774, to his farewell address from the hustings of that city, in the year 1780; and also what he himself published relative to the affairs of India. The remaining two comprize his works since the French revolution, with the exception of the Letter to Lord Kenmare on the Penal Laws against Irish Catholicks, which was probably inserted where it stands from its relation to the subject of the Letter addressed by him, at a later period, to Sir Hercules Langrishe. With the same exception, too, strict regard has been paid to chronological order, which, in the last edition, was in some instances broken, to insert pieces that were not discovered till it was too late to introduce them in their proper places.

In the Appendix to the Speech on the Nabob of Arcot's Debts, the references were found to be confused, and, in many places, erroneous. This probably had arisen from the circumstance that a larger and differently constructed Appendix seems to have been originally designed by Mr.



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Burke, which, however, he afterwards abridged and altered, while the speech and the notes upon it remained as they were. The text and the documents that support it have throughout been accommodated to each other.

The orthography has been in many cases altered, and an attempt made to reduce it to some certain standard. The rule laid down for the discharge of this task was, that whenever Mr. Burke could be perceived to have been uniform in his mode of spelling, that was considered as decisive; but, where he varied, (and as he was in the habit of writing by dictation, and leaving to others the superintendance of the press, he was peculiarly liable to variations of this sort) the best received authorities were directed to be followed. The reader, it is trusted, will find this object, too much disregarded in modern books, has here been kept in view throughout. The quotations which are interspersed through the works of Mr. Burke, and which were frequently made by him from memory, have been generally compared with the original authors. Several mistakes in printing, of one word for another, by which the sense was either perverted or obscured, are now rectified. Two or three small insertions have also been made from a quarto copy corrected by Mr. Burke himself. From the same source something more has been drawn in the shape of notes, to which are subscribed his initials. Of this number is the explanation of that celebrated phrase, "the swinish multitude:" an explanation which was uniformly given by him to his friends, in conversation on the subject. But another note will probably interest the reader still more, as being strongly expressive of that parental affection which formed so amiable a feature in the character of Mr. Burke. It is in "Reflections on the Revolution in France," Vol. III. where he points out a considerable passage as having been supplied by his "lost son." Several other parts, possibly amounting all together to a page or thereabout, were indicated in the same manner; but, as they in general consist of single sentences, and as the meaning of the mark by which they were distinguished was not actually expressed, it has not been thought necessary to notice them particularly.

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A

# VINDICATION

OF

# NATURAL SOCIETY:

OR, A VIEW OF

THE MISERIES AND EVILS ARISING TO MANKIND

FROM EVERY SPECIES OF

# ARTIFICIAL SOCIETY.

*IN A LETTER TO LORD * * * *.*

BY A LATE NOBLE WRITER.

1756.

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# PREFACE.

Before the philosophical works of Lord Bolingbroke had appeared, great things were expected from the leisure of a man, who from the splendid scene of action, in which his talents had enabled him to make so conspicuous a figure, had retired to employ those talents in the investigation of truth. Philosophy began to congratulate herself upon such a proselyte from the world of business, and hoped to have extended her power under the auspices of such a leader. In the midst of these pleasing expectations, the works themselves at last appeared in *full body*, and with great pomp. Those who searched in them for new discoveries in the mysteries of nature; those who expected something which might explain or direct the operations of the mind; those who hoped to see morality illustrated and enforced; those who looked for new helps to society and government; those who desired to see the characters and passions of mankind delineated; in short, all who consider such things as philosophy, and require some of them at least, in every philosophical work, all these were certainly disappointed; they found the landmarks of science precisely in their former places: and they thought they received but a poor recompense for this disappointment, in seeing every mode of religion attacked in a lively manner, and the foundation of every virtue, and of all government, sapped with great art and much ingenuity. What advantage do we derive from such writings? What delight can a man find in employing a capacity which might be usefully exerted for the noblest purposes, in a sort of sullen labour, in which, if the author could succeed, he is obliged to own, that nothing could be more fatal to mankind than his success?

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I cannot conceive how this sort of writers propose to compass the designs they pretend to have in view, by the instruments which they employ. Do they pretend to exalt the mind of man, by proving him no better than a beast? Do they think to enforce the practice of virtue, by denying that vice and virtue are distinguished by good or ill fortune here, or by happiness or misery hereafter? Do they imagine they shall increase our piety, and our reliance on God, by exploding his providence, and insisting that he is neither just nor good? Such are the doctrines which, sometimes concealed, sometimes openly and fully avowed, are found to prevail throughout the writings of Lord Bolingbroke; and such are the reasonings which this noble writer and several others have been pleased to dignify with the name of philosophy. If these are delivered in a specious manner, and in a style above the common, they cannot want a number of admirers of as much docility as can be wished for in disciples. To these the editor of the following little piece has addressed it: their is no reason to conceal the design of it any longer.

The design was, to shew that, without the exertion of any considerable forces, the same engines which were employed for the destruction of religion, might be employed with equal success for the subversion of government; and that specious arguments might be used against those things which they, who doubt of every thing else, will never permit to be questioned. It is an observation which I think Isocrates makes in one of his orations against the sophists, that it is far more easy to maintain a wrong cause, and to support paradoxical opinions to the satisfaction of a common auditory, than to establish a doubtful truth by solid and conclusive arguments. When men find that something can be said in favour of what, on the very proposal, they have thought utterly indefensible, they grow doubtful of their own reason; they are thrown into a sort of pleasing surprize; they run along with the speaker, charmed and captivated to find such a plentiful harvest of reasoning, where all seemed barren and unpromising. This is the fairy land of philosophy. And it very frequently happens, that those pleasing impressions on the

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imagination, subsist and produce their effect, even after the understanding has been satisfied of their unsubstantial nature. There is a sort of gloss upon ingenious falsehoods, that dazzles the imagination, but which neither belongs to, nor becomes the sober aspect of truth. I have met with a quotation in Lord Coke's reports that pleased me very much, though I do not know from whence he has taken it: "*Interdum fucata falsitas*, (says he) *in multis est probabilior, et sæpe rationibus vincit nudam veritatem.*" In such cases, the writer has a certain fire and alacrity inspired into him by a consciousness, that let it fare how it will with the subject, his ingenuity will be sure of applause; and this alacrity becomes much greater if he acts upon the offensive, by the impetuosity that always accompanies an attack, and the unfortunate propensity which mankind have to the finding and exaggerating faults. The editor is satisfied that a mind, which has no restraint from a sense of its own weakness, of its subordinate rank in the creation, and of the extreme danger of letting the imagination loose upon some subjects, may very plausibly attack every thing the most excellent and venerable; that it would not be difficult to criticise the creation itself; and that if we were to examine the divine fabricks by our ideas of reason and fitness, and to use the same method of attack by which some men have assaulted revealed religion, we might with as good colour, and with the same success, make the wisdom and power of God in his creation appear to many no better than foolishness. There is an air of plausibility which accompanies vulgar reasonings and notions taken from the beaten circle of ordinary experience, that is admirably suited to the narrow capacities of some, and to the laziness of others. But this advantage is in great measure lost, when a painful, comprehensive survey of a very complicated matter, and which requires a great variety of considerations, is to be made; when we must seek in a profound subject, not only for arguments, but for new materials of argument, their measures and their method of arrangement; when we must go out of the sphere of our ordinary ideas, and when we can never walk sure, but by being sensible of our blind-

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ness. And this we must do, or we do nothing, whenever we examine the result of a reason which is not our own. Even in matters which are, as it were, just within our reach, what would become of the world, if the practice of all moral duties, and the foundations of society, rested upon having their reasons made clear and demonstrative to every individual?

The editor knows that the subject of this letter is not so fully handled as obviously it might; it was not his design to say all that could possibly be said. It had been inexcusable to fill a large volume with the abuse of reason; nor would such an abuse have been tolerable even for a few pages, if some under-plot of more consequence than the apparent design, had not been carried on.

Some persons have thought that the advantages of the state of nature ought to have been more fully displayed. This had undoubtedly been a very ample subject for declamation; but they do not consider the character of the piece. The writers against religion, whilst they oppose every system, are wisely careful never to set up any of their own. If some inaccuracies in calculation, in reasoning, or in method, be found, perhaps these will not be looked upon as faults by the admirers of Lord Bolingbroke; who will, the editor is afraid, observe much more of his Lordship's character in such particulars of the following letter, than they are like to find of that rapid torrent of an impetuous and overbearing eloquence, and the variety of rich imagery for which that writer is justly admired.

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# PREFACE.

I HAVE endeavoured to make this edition something more full and satisfactory than the first. I have sought with the utmost care, and read with equal attention, every thing which has appeared in publick against my opinions; I have taken advantage of the candid liberty of my friends; and if by these means I have been better enabled to discover the imperfections of the work, the indulgenee it has received, imperfect as it was, furnished me with a new motive to spare no reasonable pains for its improvement. Though I have not found sufficient reason, or what appeared to me sufficient, for making any material change in my theory, I have found it necessary in many places to explain, illustrate, and enforce it. I have prefixed an introductory discourse concerning Taste: it is a matter curious in itself; and it leads naturally enough to the principal inquiry. This, with the other explanations, has made the work considerably larger; and by increasing its bulk has, I am afraid, added to its faults; so that, notwithstanding all my attention, it may stand in need of a yet greater share of indulgence than it required at its first appearance.

They who are accustomed to studies of this nature will expect, and they will allow too for many faults. They know that many of the objects of our inquiry are in themselves obscure and intricate; and that many others have been rendered so by affected refinements or false learning; they know that there are many impediments in the subject, in the prejudices of others, and even in our own, that render it a matter of no small difficulty to shew in a clear light the genuine face of nature. They know that whilst the mind is intent on the general scheme of things, some particular parts



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must be neglected; that we must often submit the style to the matter, and frequently give up the praise of elegance, satisfied with being clear.

The characters of nature are legible, it is true; but they are not plain enough to enable those who run, to read them. We must make use of a cautious, I had almost said, a timorous method of proceeding. We must not attempt to fly, when we can scarcely pretend to creep. In considering any complex matter, we ought to examine every distinct ingredient in the composition, one by one; and reduce every thing to the utmost simplicity; since the condition of our nature binds us to a strict law and very narrow limits. We ought afterwards to re-examine the principles by the effect of the composition, as well as the composition by that of the principles. We ought to compare our subject with things of a similar nature, and even with things of a contrary nature; for discoveries may be and often are made by the contrast, which would escape us on the single view. The greater number of the comparisons we make, the more general and the more certain our knowledge is like to prove, as built upon a more extensive and perfect induction.

If an inquiry thus carefully conducted, should fail at last of discovering the truth, it may answer an end perhaps as useful, in discovering to us the weakness of our own understanding. If it does not make us knowing, it may make us modest. If it does not preserve us from errour, it may at least from the spirit of errour; and may make us cautious of pronouncing with positiveness or with haste, when so much labour may end in so much uncertainty.

I could wish that in examining this theory, the same method were pursued which I endeavoured to observe in forming it. The objections, in my opinion, ought to be proposed, either to the several principles as they are distinctly considered, or to the justness of the conclusion which is drawn from them. But it is common to pass over both the premises and conclusion in silence, and to produce as an objection, some poetical passage which does not seem easily accounted for upon the principles I endeavour to establish. This manner of proceeding I should think very improper. The task

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would be infinite, if we could establish no principle until we had previously unravelled the complex texture of every image or description to be found in poets and orators. And though we should never be able to reconcile the effect of such images to our principles, this can never overturn the theory itself, whilst it is founded on certain and indisputable facts. A theory founded on experiment, and not assumed, is always good for so much as it explains. Our inability to push it indefinitely is no argument at all against it. This inability may be owing to our ignorance of some necessary *mediums;* to a want of proper application; to many other causes besides a defect in the principles we employ. In reality, the subject requires a much closer attention, than we dare claim from our manner of treating it.

If it should not appear on the face of the work, I must caution the reader against imagining that I intended a full dissertation on the Sublime and Beautiful. My inquiry went no farther than to the origin of these ideas. If the qualities which I have ranged under the head of the Sublime be all found consistent with each other, and all different from those which I place under the head of beauty; and if those which compose the class of the Beautiful have the same consistency with themselves, and the same opposition to those which are classed under the denomination of Sublime, I am in little pain whether any body chooses to follow the name I give them or not, provided he allows that what I dispose under different heads are in reality different things in nature. The use I make of the words may be blamed, as too confined or too extended; my meaning cannot well be misunderstood.

To conclude; whatever progress may be made towards the discovery of truth in this matter, I do not repent the pains I have taken in it. The use of such inquiries may be very considerable. Whatever turns the soul inward on itself, tends to concenter its forces, and to fit it for greater and stronger flights of science. By looking into physical causes, our minds are opened and enlarged; and in this pursuit, whether we take or whether we lose our game, the chace is certainly of service. Cicero, true as he was to the acade-

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mick philosophy, and consequently led to reject the certainty of physical, as of every other kind of knowledge, yet freely confesses its great importance to the human understanding; "*Est animorum ingeniorumque nostrorum naturale quod dam quasi pabulum consideratio contemplatioque naturæ.*" If we can direct the lights we derive from such exalted speculations, upon the humbler field of the imagination, whilst we investigate the springs, and trace the courses of our passions, we may not only communicate to the taste a sort of philosophical solidity, but we may reflect back on the severer sciences some of the graces and elegancies of taste, without which the greatest proficiency in those sciences will always have the appearance of something illiberal.

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# A LETTER TO LORD *****

SHALL I venture to say, my Lord, that in our late conversation, you were inclined to the party which you adopted rather by the feelings of your good nature, than by the conviction of your judgment? We laid open the foundations of society; and you feared, that the curiosity of this search might endanger the ruin of the whole fabrick. You would readily have allowed my principle, but you dreaded the consequences; you thought, that having once entered upon these reasonings, we might be carried insensibly and irresistibly farther than at first we could either have imagined or wished. But for my part, my Lord, I then thought, and am still of the same opinion, that errour, and not truth of any kind, is dangerous; that ill conclusions can only flow from false propositions; and that, to know whether any proposition be true or false, it is a preposterous method to examine it by its apparent consequences.

These were the reasons which induced me to go so far into that inquiry; and they are the reasons which direct me in all my enquiries. I had indeed often reflected on that subject before I could prevail on myself to communicate my reflections to any body. They were generally melancholy enough; as those usually are which carry us beyond the mere surface of things; and which would undoubtedly make the lives of all thinking men extremely miserable, if the same philosophy which caused the grief, did not at the same time administer the comfort.

On considering political societies, their origin, their constitution, and their effects, I have sometimes been in a good deal more than doubt, whether the Creator did ever really intend man for a state of happiness. He has mixed in his cup a number of natural evils, (in spite of the boasts of stoi-



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cism they are evils) and every endeavour which the art and policy of mankind has used from the beginning of the world to this day, in order to alleviate, or cure them, has only served to introduce new mischiefs, or to aggravate and inflame the old. Besides this, the mind of man itself is too active and restless a principle ever to settle on the true point of quiet. It discovers every day some craving want in a body, which really wants but little. It every day invents some new artificial rule to guide that nature which, if left to itself, were the best and surest guide. It finds out imaginary beings prescribing imaginary laws; and then, it raises imaginary terrours to support a belief in the beings, and an obedience to the laws. Many things have been said, and very well undoubtedly, on the subjection in which we should preserve our bodies to the government of our understanding; but enough has not been said upon the restraint which our bodily necessities ought to lay on the extravagant sublimities and eccentrick rovings of our minds. The body, or, as some love to call it, our inferiour nature, is wiser in its own plain way, and attends its own business more directly than the mind with all its boasted subtilty.

In the state of nature, without question, mankind was subjected to many and great inconveniencies. Want of union, want of mutual assistance, want of a common arbitrator to resort to in their differences. These were evils which they could not but have felt pretty severely on many occasions. The original children of the earth lived with their brethren of the other kinds in much equality. Their diet must have been confined almost wholly to the vegetable kind; and the same tree, which in its flourishing state produced them berries, in its decay gave them an habitation. The mutual desires of the sexes uniting their bodies and affections, and the children, which are the results of these intercourses, introduced first the notion of society, and taught its conveniencies. This society, founded in natural appetites and instincts, and not in any positive institution, I shall call *natural society*. Thus far nature went and succeeded; but man would go farther. The great errour of our nature is, not to know where to stop, not to be satisfied with any reasonable ac-

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quirement; not to compound with our condition; but to lose all we have gained by an insatiable pursuit after more. Man found a considerable advantage by this union of many persons to form one family; he therefore judged that he would find his account proportionably in an union of many families into one body politick. And as nature has formed no bond of union to hold them together, he supplied this defect by *laws*.

This is *political society*. And hence the sources of what are usually called states, civil societies or governments; into some form of which, more extended or restrained, all mankind have gradually fallen. And since it has so happened, and that we owe an implicit reverence to all the institutions of our ancestors, we shall consider these institutions with all that modesty with which we ought to conduct ourselves in examining a received opinion; but with all that freedom and candour which we owe to truth wherever we find it, or however it may contradict our own notions, or oppose our own interests. There is a most absurd and audacious method of reasoning avowed by some bigots and enthusiasts, and through fear assented to by some wiser and better men; it is this: They argue against a fair discussion of popular prejudices, because, say they, though they would be found without any reasonable support, yet the discovery might be productive of the most dangerous consequences. Absurd and blasphemous notion! as if all happiness was not connected with the practice of virtue, which necessarily depends upon the knowledge of truth; that is, upon the knowledge of those unalterable relations which Providence has ordained that every thing should bear to every other. These relations, which are truth itself, the foundation of virtue, and consequently, the only measures of happiness, should be likewise the only measures by which we should direct our reasoning. To these we should conform in good earnest; and not think to force nature, and the whole order of her system, by a compliance with our pride, and folly, to conform to our artificial regulations. It is by a conformity to this method we owe the discovery of the few truths we know, and the little liberty and rational happiness we enjoy. We have something

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fairer play than a reasoner could have expected formerly; and we derive advantages from it which are very visible.

The fabrick of superstition has in this our age and nation received much ruder shocks than it had ever felt before; and through the chinks and breaches of our prison, we see such glimmerings of light, and feel such refreshing airs of liberty, as daily raise our ardour for more. The miseries derived to mankind from superstition, under the name of religion, and of ecclesiastical tyranny under the name of church government, have been clearly and usefully exposed. We begin to think and to act from reason and from nature alone. This is true of several, but still is by far the majority in the same old state of blindness and slavery; and much is it to be feared that we shall perpetually relapse, whilst the real productive cause of all this superstitious folly, enthusiastical nonsense, and holy tyranny, holds a reverend place in the estimation even of those who are otherwise enlightened.

Civil government borrows a strength from ecclesiastical; and artificial laws receive a sanction from artificial revelations. The ideas of religion and government are closely connected; and whilst we receive government as a thing necessary, or even useful to our well-being, we shall in spite of us draw in, as a necessary, though undesirable consequence, an artificial religion of some kind or other. To this the vulgar will always be voluntary slaves; and even those of a rank of understanding superior, will now and then involuntarily feel its influence. It is therefore of the deepest concernment to us to be set right in this point; and to be well satisfied whether civil government be such a protector from natural evils, and such a nurse and increaser of blessings, as those of warm imaginations promise. In such a discussion, far am I from proposing in the least to reflect on our most wise form of government; no more than I would in the freer parts of my philosophical writings mean to object to the piety, truth and perfection of our most excellent church. Both I am sensible have their foundations on a rock. No discovery of truth can prejudice them. On the contrary, the more closely the origin of religion and government are examined, the more clearly their excellencies must appear. They come purified from the fire. My

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business is not with them. Having entered a protest against all objections from these quarters, I may the more freely enquire from history and experience, how far policy has contributed in all times to alleviate those evils which Providence, that perhaps has designed us for a state of imperfection, has imposed; how far our physical skill has cured our constitutional disorders; and whether it may not have introduced new ones, curable perhaps by no skill.

In looking over any state to form a judgment on it; it presents itself in two lights, the external and the internal. The first, that relation which it bears in point of friendship or enmity to other states. The second, that relation which its component parts, the governing and the governed, bear to each other. The first part of the external view of all states, their relation as friends, makes so trifling a figure in history, that I am very sorry to say, it affords me but little matter on which to expatiate. The good offices done by one nation to its neighbour;* the support given in publick distress; the relief afforded in general calamity; the protection granted in emergent danger: the mutual return of kindness and civility, would afford a very ample and very pleasing subject for history. But, alas! all the history of all times, concerning all nations, does not afford matter enough to fill ten pages, though it should be spun out by the wire-drawing amplification of a Guicciardini himself. The glaring side is that of enmity. War is the matter which fills all history, and consequently the only or almost the only view in which we can see the external of political society, is in a hostile shape; and the only actions, to which we have always seen, and still see all of them intent, are such as tend to the destruction of one another. War, says Machiavel, ought to be the only study of a prince; and by a prince, he means every sort of state, however constituted. He ought, says this great political Doctor, to consider peace only as a breathing-time, which gives him leisure to contrive,

* Had his Lordship lived to our days, to have seen the noble relief given by this nation to the distressed Portuguese, he had perhaps owned this part of his argument a little weakened, but we do not think ourselves entitled to alter his Lordship's words, but that we are bound to follow him exactly.

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and furnishes ability to execute military plans. A meditation on the conduct of political societies made old Hobbes imagine, that war was the state of nature; and truly, if a man judged of the individuals of our race by their conduct when united and packed into nations and kingdoms, he might imagine that every sort of virtue was unnatural and foreign to the mind of man.

The first accounts we have of mankind are but so many accounts of their butcheries. All empires have been cemented in blood; and in those early periods when the race of mankind began first to form themselves into parties and combinations, the first effect of the combination, and indeed the end for which it seems purposely formed, and best calculated, is their mutual destruction. All ancient history is dark and uncertain. One thing however is clear. There were conquerors, and conquests in those days; and consequently, all that devastation, by which they are formed, and all that oppression by which they are maintained. We know little of Sesostris, but that he led out of Egypt an army of above 700,000 men; that he over-ran the Mediterranean coast as far as Colchis; that in some places, he met but little resistance, and of course shed not a great deal of blood; but that he found in others, a people who knew the value of their liberties, and sold them dear. Whoever considers the army this conqueror headed, the space he traversed, and the opposition he frequently met, with the natural accidents of sickness, and the dearth and badness of provision to which he must have been subject in the variety of climates and countries his march lay through; if he knows any thing, he must know, that even the conqueror's army must have suffered greatly; and that, of this immense number, but a very small part could have returned to enjoy the plunder accumulated by the loss of so many of their companions, and the devastation of so considerable a part of the world. Considering, I say, the vast army headed by this conqueror, whose unwieldly weight was almost alone sufficient to wear down its strength, it will be far from excess to suppose that one half was lost in the expedition. If this was the state of the victorious, and, from the circumstances,

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it must have been this at the least; the vanquished must have had a much heavier loss, as the greatest slaughter is always in the flight, and great carnage did in those times and countries ever attend the first rage of conquest. It will therefore be very reasonable to allow on their account as much as, added to the losses of the conqueror, may amount to a million of deaths, and then we shall see this conqueror, the oldest we have on the records of history, (though, as we have observed before, the chronology of these remote times is extremely uncertain) opening the scene by a destruction of at least one million of his species, unprovoked but by his ambition, without any motives but pride, cruelty, and madness, and without any benefit to himself; (for Justin expressly tells us he did not maintain his conquests) but solely to make so many people, in so distant countries, feel experimentally, how severe a scourge Providence intends for the human race, when he gives one man the power over many, and arms his naturally impotent, and feeble rage, with the hands of millions, who know no common principle of action, but a blind obedience to the passions of their ruler.

The next personage who figures in the tragedies of this ancient theatre is Semiramis: for we have no particulars of Ninus, but that he made immense and rapid conquests, which doubtless were not compassed without the usual carnage. We see an army of above three millions employed by this martial queen in a war against the Indians. We see the Indians arming a yet greater; and we behold a war continued with much fury, and with various success. This ends in the retreat of the queen, with scarce a third of the troops employed in the expedition; an expedition, which at this rate must have cost two millions of souls on her part; and it is not unreasonable to judge that the country which was the seat of war must have been an equal sufferer. But I am content to detract from this, and to suppose that the Indians lost only half so much, and then the account stands thus: In this war alone, (for Semiramis had other wars) in this single reign, and in this one spot of the globe, did three millions of souls expire, with all the horrid and shocking cir-

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cumstances which attend all wars, and in a quarrel, in which none of the sufferers could have the least rational concern.

The Babylonian, Assyrian, Median, and Persian monarchies must have poured out seas of blood in their formation, and in their destruction. The armies and fleets of Xerxes, their numbers, the glorious stand made against them, and the unfortunate event of all his mighty preparations, are known to every body. In this expedition, draining half Asia of its inhabitants, he led an army of about two millions to be slaughtered, and wasted, by a thousand fatal accidents, in the same place where his predecessors had before by a similar madness consumed the flower of so many kingdoms, and wasted the force of so extensive an empire. It is a cheap calculation to say, that the Persian empire in its wars, against the Greeks and Scythians, threw away at least four millions of its subjects, to say nothing of its other wars, and the losses sustained in them. These were their losses abroad; but the war was brought home to them, first by Agesilaus, and afterwards, by Alexander. I have not, in this retreat, the books necessary to make very exact calculations; nor is it necessary to give more than hints to one of your Lordship's erudition. You will recollect his uninterrupted series of success. You will run over his battles. You will call to mind the carnage which was made. You will give a glance at the whole, and you will agree with me; that to form this hero no less than twelve hundred thousand lives must have been sacrificed; but no sooner had he fallen himself a sacrifice to his vices, than a thousand breaches were made for ruin to enter, and give the last hand to this scene of misery and destruction. His kingdom was rent and divided; which served to employ the more distinct parts to tear each other to pieces, and bury the whole in blood and slaughter. The kings of Syria and of Egypt, the kings of Pergamus and Macedon, without intermission worried each other for above two hundred years; until at last a strong power arising in the west, rushed in upon them and silenced their tumults, by involving all the contending parties in the same destruction. It is little to say,

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that the contentions between the successors of Alexander depopulated that part of the world of at least two millions.

The struggle between the Macedonians and Greeks, and before that, the disputes of the Greek commonwealths among themselves, for an unprofitable superiority, form one of the bloodiest scenes in history. One is astonished how such a small spot could furnish men sufficient to sacrifice to the pitiful ambition of possessing five or six thousand more acres, or two or three more villages: yet to see the acrimony and bitterness with which this was disputed between the Athenians and Lacedemonians; what armies cut off; what fleets sunk and burnt; what a number of cities sacked, and their inhabitants slaughtered, and captived; one would be induced to believe the decision of the fate of mankind at least, depended upon it! But these disputes ended as all such ever have done, and ever will do; in a real weakness of all parties; a momentary shadow, and dream of power in some one; and the subjection of all to the yoke of a stranger, who knows how to profit of their divisions. This at least was the case of the Greeks; and sure, from the earliest accounts of them, to their absorption into the Roman empire, we cannot judge that their intestine divisions, and their foreign wars consumed less than three millions of their inhabitants.

What an Aceldama, what a field of blood Sicily has been in ancient times, whilst the mode of its government was controverted between the republican and tyrannical parties, and the possession struggled for by the natives, the Greeks, the Carthaginians, and the Romans, your Lordship will easily recollect. You will remember the total destruction of such bodies as an army of 300,000 men. You will find every page of its history dyed in blood, and blotted and confounded by tumults, rebellions, massacres, assassinations, proscriptions, and a series of horrour beyond the histories perhaps of any other nation in the world; though the histories of all nations are made up of similar matter. I once more excuse myself in point of exactness for want of books. But I shall estimate the slaughters in this island but at two



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millions; which your Lordship will find much short of the reality.

Let us pass by the wars and the consequences of them, which wasted Grecia-Magna, before the Roman power prevailed in that part of Italy. They are perhaps exaggerated; therefore I shall only rate them at one million. Let us hasten to open that great scene which establishes the Roman empire, and forms the grand catastrophe of the ancient drama. This empire, whilst in its infancy, began by an effusion of human blood scarcely credible. The neighbouring little states teemed for new destruction: the Sabines, the Samnites, the Æqui, the Volsci, the Hetrurians, were broken by a series of slaughters which had no interruption, for some hundreds of years; slaughters which upon all sides consumed more than two millions of the wretched people. The Gauls rushing into Italy about this time, added the total destruction of their own armies to those of the ancient inhabitants. In short, it were hardly possible to conceive a more horrid and bloody picture, if that the Punick wars that ensued soon after did not present one, that far exceeds it. Here we find that climax of devastation and ruin, which seemed to shake the whole earth. The extent of this war which vexed so many nations, and both elements, and the havock of the human species caused in both, really astonishes beyond expression, when it is nakedly considered, and those matters which are apt to divert our attention from it, the characters, actions, and designs of the persons concerned, are not taken into the account. These wars, I mean those called the Punick wars, could not have stood the human race in less than three millions of the species. And yet this forms but a part only, and a very small part, of the havock caused by the Roman ambition. The war with Mithridates was very little less bloody; that prince cut off at one stroke 150,000 Romans by a massacre. In that war Sylla destroyed 300,000 men at Cheronea. He defeated Mithridates' army under Dorilaus, and slew 300,000. This great and unfortunate prince lost another 300,000 before Cyzicum. In the course of the war he had innumerable other losses; and having many intervals of success, he revenged them severely. He was at last totally overthrown; and he crushed to pieces the king of Armenia his ally

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by the greatness of his ruin. All who had connexions with him shared the same fate. The merciless genius of Sylla had its full scope; and the streets of Athens were not the only ones which ran with blood. At this period, the sword, glutted with foreign slaughter, turned its edge upon the bowels of the Roman republick itself; and presented a scene of cruelties and treasons enough almost to obliterate the memory of all the external devastations. I intended, my Lord, to have proceeded in a sort of method in estimating the numbers of mankind cut off in these wars which we have on record. But I am obliged to alter my design. Such a tragical uniformity of havock and murder would disgust your Lordship as much as it would me; and I confess I already feel my eyes ache by keeping them so long intent on so bloody a prospect. I shall observe little on the Servile, the Social, the Gallick and Spanish wars; nor upon those with Jugurtha, nor Antiochus, nor many others equally important, and carried on with equal fury. The butcheries of Julius Cæsar alone, are calculated by somebody else; the numbers he has been a means of destroying have been reckoned at 1,200,000. But to give your Lordship an idea that may serve as a standard, by which to measure, in some degree, the others; you will turn your eyes on Judea; a very inconsiderable spot of the earth in itself, though ennobled by the singular events which had their rise in that country.

This spot happened, it matters not here by what means, to become at several times extremely populous, and to supply men for slaughters scarcely credible, if other well-known and well-attested ones had not given them a colour. The first settling of the Jews here, was attended by an almost entire extirpation of all the former inhabitants. Their own civil wars, and those with their petty neighbours, consumed vast multitudes almost every year for several centuries; and the irruptions of the kings of Babylon and Assyria made immense ravages. Yet we have their history but partially, in an indistinct confused manner; so that I shall only throw the strong point of light upon that part which coincides with Roman history, and of that part only on the point of time when they received the great and final stroke which made them no more a nation; a stroke which is allowed to have

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cut off little less than two millions of that people. I say nothing of the loppings made from that stock whilst it stood; nor from the suckers that grew out of the old root ever since. But if in this inconsiderable part of the globe, such a carnage has been made in two or three short reigns, and that this great carnage, great as it is, makes but a minute part of what the histories of that people inform us they suffered; what shall we judge of countries more extended, and which have waged wars by far more considerable?

Instances of this sort compose the uniform of history. But there have been periods when no less than universal destruction to the race of mankind seems to have been threatened. Such was that, when the Goths, the Vandals, and the Huns poured into Gaul, Italy, Spain, Greece, and Africa, carrying destruction before them as they advanced, and leaving horrid desarts every way behind them. *Vastum ubique silentium, secreti colles; fumantia procul tecta; nemo exploratoribus obvius*, is what Tacitus calls *facies victoriæ*. It is always so; but was here emphatically so. From the north proceeded the swarms of Goths, Vandals, Huns, Ostrogoths, who ran towards the south into Africa itself, which suffered as all to the north had done. About this time, another torrent of barbarians, animated by the same fury, and encouraged by the same success, poured out of the south, and ravaged all to the north-east and west, to the remotest parts of Persia on one hand, and to the banks of the Loire or further on the other; destroying all the proud and curious monuments of human art, that not even the memory might seem to survive of the former inhabitants. What has been done since, and what will continue to be done while the same inducements to war continue, I shall not dwell upon. I shall only in one word mention the horrid effects of bigotry and avarice, in the conquest of Spanish America; a conquest on a low estimation effected by the murder of ten millions of the species. I shall draw to a conclusion of this part, by making a general calculation of the whole. I think I have actually mentioned above thirty-six millions. I have not particularized any more. I don't pretend to exactness; therefore, for the sake of a gen-

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eral view, I shall lay together all those actually slain in battles, or who have perished in a no less miserable manner by the other destructive consequences of war from the beginning of the world to this day, in the four parts of it, at a thousand times as much; no exaggerated calculation, allowing for time and extent. We have not perhaps spoke of the five-hundredth part; I am sure I have not of what is actually ascertained in history; but how much of these butcheries are only expressed in generals, what part of time history has never reached, and what vast spaces of the habitable globe it has not embraced, I need not mention to your Lordship. I need not enlarge on those torrents of silent and inglorious blood which have glutted the thirsty sands of Africk, or discoloured the polar snow, or fed the savage forests of America for so many ages of continual war. Shall I, to justify my calculations from the charge of extravagance, add to the account those skirmishes which happen in all wars, without being singly of sufficient dignity in mischief, to merit a place in history, but which by their frequency compensate for this comparative innocence; shall I inflame the account by those general massacres which have devoured whole cities and nations; those wasting pestilences, those consuming famines, and all those furies that follow in the train of war? I have no need to exaggerate; and I have purposely avoided a parade of eloquence on this occasion. I should despise it upon any occasion; else in mentioning these slaughters, it is obvious how much the whole might be heightened, by an affecting description of the horrours that attend the wasting of kingdoms, and sacking of cities. But I do not write to the vulgar, nor to that which only governs the vulgar, their passions. I go upon a naked and moderate calculation, just enough, without a pedantical exactness, to give your Lordship some feeling of the effects of political society. I charge the whole of these effects on political society. I avow the charge, and I shall presently make it good to your Lordship's satisfaction. The numbers I particularized are about thirty-six millions. Besides those killed in battles I have said something, not half what the matter would have justified, but something I have said, con-

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cerning the consequences of war even more dreadful than that monstrous carnage itself which shocks our humanity, and almost staggers our belief. So that allowing me in my exuberance one way, for my deficiency in the other, you will find me not unreasonable. I think the numbers of men now upon earth are computed at five hundred millions at the most. Here the slaughter of mankind, on what you will call a small calculation, amounts to upwards of seventy times the number of souls this day on the globe: a point which may furnish matter of reflection to one less inclined to draw consequences than your Lordship.

I now come to shew that political society is justly chargeable with much the greatest part of this destruction of the species. To give the fairest play to every side of the question, I will own that there is a haughtiness, and fierceness in human nature, which will cause innumerable broils, place men in what situation you please; but owning this, I still insist in charging it to political regulations, that these broils are so frequent, so cruel, and attended with consequences so deplorable. In a state of nature, it had been impossible to find a number of men, sufficient for such slaughters, agreed in the same bloody purpose; or allowing that they might have come to such an agreement, (an impossible supposition) yet the means that simple nature has supplied them with, are by no means adequate to such an end; many scratches, many bruises undoubtedly would be received upon all hands; but only a few, a very few deaths. Society, and politics, which have given us these destructive views, have given us also the means of satisfying them. From the earliest dawnings of policy to this day, the inventions of men have been sharpening and improving the mystery of murder, from the first rude essays of clubs and stones, to the present perfection of gunnery, cannoneering, bombarding, mining, and all these species of artificial, learned, and refined cruelty, in which we are now so expert, and which make a principal part of what politicians have taught us to believe is our principal glory.

How far mere nature would have carried us, we may judge by the example of those animals, who still follow her laws, and even of those to whom she has given dispositions more

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fierce, and arms more terrible than ever she intended we should use. It is an incontestible truth, that there is more havock made in one year by men, of men, than has been made by all the lions, tygers, panthers, ounces, leopards, hyenas, rhinoceroses, elephants, bears, and wolves, upon their several species, since the beginning of the world; though these agree ill enough with each other, and have a much greater proportion of rage and fury in their composition than we have. But with respect to you, ye legislators, ye civilizers of mankind! ye Orpheuses, Moseses, Minoses, Solons, Theseuses, Lycurguses, Numas! with respect to you be it spoken, your regulations have done more mischief in cold blood, than all the rage of the fiercest animals in their greatest terrours, or furies, has ever done, or ever could do!

These evils are not accidental. Whoever will take the pains to consider the nature of society, will find they result directly from its constitution. For as *subordination*, or, in other words, the reciprocation of tyranny, and slavery, is requisite to support these societies, the interest, the ambition, the malice, or the revenge, nay even the whim and caprice of one ruling man among them, is enough to arm all the rest, without any private views of their own, to the worst and blackest purposes; and what is at once lamentable, and ridiculous, these wretches engage under those banners with a fury greater than if they were animated by revenge for their own proper wrongs.

It is no less worth observing, that this artificial division of mankind, into separate societies, is a perpetual source in itself of hatred and dissension among them. The names which distinguish them are enough to blow up hatred, and rage. Examine history; consult present experience; and you will find, that far the greater part of the quarrels between several nations, had scarce any other occasion, than, that these nations were different combinations of people, and called by different names; to an Englishman, the name of a Frenchman, a Spaniard, an Italian, much more a Turk, or a Tartar, raises of course ideas of hatred, and contempt. If you would inspire this compatriot of ours with pity or regard, for one of these; would you not hide that distinction? You would not

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pray him to compassionate the poor Frenchman, or the unhappy German. Far from it; you would speak of him as a *foreigner*, an accident to which all are liable. You would represent him as a *man*, one partaking with us of the same common nature, and subject to the same law. There is something so averse from our nature in these artificial political distinctions, that we need no other trumpet to kindle us to war, and destruction. But there is something so benign and healing in the general voice of humanity, that maugre all our regulations to prevent it, the simple name of man applied properly, never fails to work a salutary effect.

This natural unpremeditated effect of policy on the unpossessed passions of mankind, appears on other occasions. The very name of a politician, a statesman, is sure to cause terrour and hatred; it has always connected with it the ideas of treachery, cruelty, fraud and tyranny; and those writers who have faithfully unveiled the mysteries of state-freemasonry, have ever been held in general detestation, for even knowing so perfectly a theory so detestable. The case of Machiavel seems at first sight something hard in that respect. He is obliged to bear the iniquities of those whose maxims and rules of government he published. His speculation is more abhorred than their practice.

But if there were no other arguments against artificial society than this I am going to mention, methinks it ought to fall by this one only. All writers on the science of policy are agreed, and they agree with experience, that all governments must frequently infringe the rules of justice to support themselves; that truth must give way to dissimulation; honesty to convenience; and humanity itself to the reigning interest. The whole of this mystery of iniquity is called the reason of state. It is a reason which I own I cannot penetrate. What sort of a protection is this of the general right, that is maintained by infringing the rights of particulars? What sort of justice is this, which is enforced by breaches of its own laws? These paradoxes I leave to be solved by the able heads of legislators and politicians. For my part, I say what a plain man would say on such an occasion. I can never believe, that any institution agreeable to nature, and

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proper for mankind, could find it necessary, or even expedient in any case whatsoever, to do, what the best and worthiest instincts of mankind warn us to avoid. But no wonder, that what is set up in opposition to the state of nature, should preserve itself by trampling upon the law of nature.

To prove that these sorts of policed societies are a violation offered to nature, and a constraint upon the human mind, it needs only to look upon the sanguinary measures, and instruments of violence which are every where used to support them. Let us take a review of the dungeons, whips, chains, racks, gibbets, with which every society is abundantly stored, by which hundreds of victims are annually offered up to support a dozen or two in pride and madness, and millions in an abject servitude and dependence. There was a time, when I looked with a reverential awe on these mysteries of policy; but age, experience, and philosophy, have rent the veil; and I view this *sanctum sanctorum*, at least, without any enthusiastick admiration. I acknowledge indeed, the necessity of such a proceeding in such institutions; but I must have a very mean opinion of institutions where such proceedings are necessary.

It is a misfortune, that in no part of the globe natural liberty and natural religion are to be found pure, and free from the mixture of political adulterations. Yet we have implanted in us by Providence, ideas, axioms, rules, of what is pious, just, fair, honest, which no political craft, nor learned sophistry, can entirely expel from our breasts. By these we judge, and we cannot otherwise judge of the several artificial modes of religion and society, and determine of them as they approach to, or recede from this standard.

The simplest form of government is *despotism*, where all the inferiour orbs of power are moved merely by the will of the Supreme, and all that are subjected to them, directed in the same manner, merely by the occasional will of the magistrate. This form, as it is the most simple, so it is infinitely the most general. Scarce any part of the world is exempted from its power. And in those few places where men enjoy what they call liberty, it is continually in a tottering situation, and makes greater and greater strides to that



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gulph of despotism which at last swallows up every species of government. The manner of ruling being directed merely by the will of the weakest, and generally the worst man in the society, becomes the most foolish and capricious thing, at the same time that it is the most terrible and destructive, that well can be conceived. In a despotism the principal person finds, that let the want, misery, and indigence of his subjects be what they will, he can yet possess abundantly of every thing to gratify his most insatiable wishes. He does more. He finds that these gratifications increase in proportion to the wretchedness and slavery of his subjects. Thus encouraged both by passion and interest to trample on the publick welfare, and by his station placed above both shame and fear, he proceeds to the most horrid and shocking outrages upon mankind. Their persons become victims of his suspicions. The slightest displeasure is death; and a disagreeable aspect is often as great a crime as high treason. In the court of Nero, a person of learning, of unquestioned merit, and of unsuspected loyalty, was put to death for no other reason than that he had a pedantick countenance which displeased the emperor. This very monster of mankind appeared in the beginning of his reign to be a person of virtue. Many of the greatest tyrants on the records of history have begun their reigns in the fairest manner. But the truth is, this unnatural power corrupts both the heart and the understanding. And to prevent the least hope of amendment, a king is ever surrounded by a crowd of infamous flatterers, who find their account in keeping him from the least light of reason, till all ideas of rectitude and justice are utterly erased from his mind. When Alexander had in his fury inhumanly butchered one of his best friends and bravest captains; on the return of reason he began to conceive an horrour suitable to the guilt of such a murder. In this juncture, his counsel came to his assistance. But what did his council? They found him out a philosopher who gave him comfort. And in what manner did this philosopher comfort him for the loss of such a man, and heal his conscience, flagrant with the smart of such a crime? You have the matter at length in Plutarch. He told him; "*that*

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*let a sovereign do what he will, all his actions are just and lawful, because they are his.*" The palaces of all princes abound with such courtly philosophers. The consequence was such as might be expected. He grew every day a monster more abandoned to unnatural lust, to debauchery, to drunkenness, and to murder. And yet this was originally a great man, of uncommon capacity, and a strong propensity to virtue. But unbounded power proceeds step by step, until it has eradicated every laudable principle. It has been remarked, that there is no prince so bad, whose favourites and ministers are not worse. There is hardly any prince without a favourite, by whom he is governed in as arbitrary a manner as he governs the wretches subjected to him. Here the tyranny is doubled. There are two courts, and two interests; both very different from the interests of the people. The favourite knows that the regard of a tyrant is as inconstant and capricious as that of a woman; and concluding his time to be short, he makes haste to fill up the measure of his iniquity, in rapine, in luxury, and in revenge. Every avenue to the throne is shut up. He oppresses, and ruins the people, whilst he persuades the prince, that those murmurs raised by his own oppression are the effects of disaffection to the prince's government. Then is the natural violence of despotism inflamed, and aggravated by hatred and revenge. To deserve well of the state is a crime against the prince. To be popular, and to be a traitor, are considered as synonymous terms. Even virtue is dangerous, as an aspiring quality, that claims an esteem by itself, and independent of the countenance of the court. What has been said of the chief, is true of the inferiour officers of this species of government; each in his province exercising the same tyranny, and grinding the people by an oppression, the more severely felt, as it is near them, and exercised by base and subordinate persons. For the gross of the people; they are considered as a mere herd of cattle; and really in a little time become no better; all principle of honest pride, all sense of the dignity of their nature, is lost in their slavery. The day, says Homer, which makes man a slave, takes away half his worth; and in fact, he loses every impulse to action, but that low and base one

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of fear.—In this kind of government, human nature is not only abused, and insulted, but it is actually degraded and sunk into a species of brutality. The consideration of this made Mr. Locke say, with great justice, that a government of this kind was worse than anarchy; indeed it is so abhorred and detested, by all who live under forms that have a milder appearance, that there is scarce a rational man in Europe, that would not prefer death to Asiatick despotism. Here then we have the acknowledgment of a great philosopher, that an irregular state of nature is preferable to such a government; we have the consent of all sensible and generous men, who carry it yet further, and avow that death itself is preferable; and yet this species of government, so justly condemned, and so generally detested, is what infinitely the greater part of mankind groan under, and have groaned under from the beginning. So that by sure and uncontested principles, the greatest part of the governments on earth must be concluded tyrannies, impostures, violations of the natural rights of mankind, and worse than the most disorderly anarchies. How much other forms exceed this, we shall consider immediately.

In all parts of the world, mankind, however debased, retains still the sense of *feeling;* the weight of tyranny, at last, becomes insupportable; but the remedy is not so easy; in general, the only remedy by which they attempt to cure the tyranny, is to change the tyrant. This is, and always was the case, for the greater part. In some countries, however, were found men of more penetration; who discovered, "*that to live by one man's will, was the cause of all men's misery.*" They therefore changed their former method, and assembling the men in their several societies, the most respectable for their understanding and fortunes, they confided to them the charge of the publick welfare. This originally formed what is called an *aristocracy.* They hoped, it would be impossible that such a number could ever join in any design against the general good; and they promised themselves a great deal of security and happiness, from the united councils of so many able and experienced persons. But it is now found by abundant experience, that an *aristocracy*, and a *des-*

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*potism*, differ but in name ; and that a people, who are in general excluded from any share of the legislative are to all intents and purposes, as much slaves, when twenty, independent of them, govern, as when but one domineers. The tyranny is even more felt, as every individual of the nobles has the haughtiness of a sultan ; the people are more miserable, as they seem on the verge of liberty, from which they are forever debarred ; this fallacious idea of liberty, whilst it presents a vain shadow of happiness to the subject, binds faster the chains of his subjection. What is left undone, by the natural avarice and pride of those who are raised above the others, is completed by their suspicions, and their dread of losing an authority, which has no support in the common utility of the nation. A Genoese, or a Venetian republick, is a concealed *despotism;* where you find the same pride of the rulers, the same base subjection of the people, the same bloody maxims of a suspicious policy. In one respect the *aristocracy* is worse than the *despotism*. A body politick, whilst it retains its authority, never changes its maxims ; a *despotism*, which is this day horrible to a supreme degree, by the caprice natural to the heart of man, may, by the same caprice otherwise exerted, be as lovely the next ; in a succession, it is possible to meet with some good princes. If there have been Tiberiuses, Caligulas, Neros, there have been likewise the serener days of Vespasians, Tituses, Trajans, and Antonines ; but a body politick is not influenced by caprice or whim ; it proceeds in a regular manner ; its succession is insensible ; and every man as he enters it, either has, or soon attains the spirit of the whole body. Never was it known, that an *aristocracy*, which was haughty and tyrannical in one century, became easy and mild in the next. In effect, the yoke of this species of government is so galling, that whenever the people have got the least power, they have shaken it off with the utmost indignation, and established a popular form. And when they have not had strength enough to support themselves, they have thrown themselves into the arms of *despotism*, as the more eligible of the two evils. This latter was the case of Denmark, who sought a refuge from the oppression of its nobility, in the strong hold

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of arbitrary power. Poland has at present the name of republick, and it is one of the *aristocratick* form ; but it is well known, that the little-finger of this government, is heavier than the loins of arbitrary power in most nations. The people are not only politically, but personally slaves, and treated with the utmost indignity. The republick of Venice is somewhat more moderate ; yet even here, so heavy is the *aristocratick* yoke, that the nobles have been obliged to enervate the spirit of their subjects by every sort of debauchery; they have denied them the liberty of reason, and they have made them amends, by what a base soul will think a more valuable liberty, by not only allowing, but encouraging them to corrupt themselves in the most scandalous manner. They consider their subjects, as the farmer does the hog he keeps to feast upon. He holds him fast in his stye, but allows him to wallow as much as he pleases in his beloved filth and gluttony. So scandalously debauched a people as that of Venice, is to be met with no where else. High, low, men, women, clergy, and laity, are all alike. The ruling nobility are no less afraid of one another, than they are of the people ; and for that reason, politically enervate their own body by the same effeminate luxury, by which they corrupt their subjects. They are impoverished by every means which can be invented ; and they are kept in a perpetual terrour by the horrours of a state-inquisition. Here you see a people deprived of all rational freedom, and tyrannized over by about two thousand men ; and yet this body of two thousand, are so far from enjoying any liberty by the subjection of the rest, that they are in an infinitely severer state of slavery ; they make themselves the most degenerate and unhappy of mankind, for no other purpose than that they may the more effectually contribute to the misery of a whole nation. In short, the regular and methodical proceedings of an *aristocracy*, are more intolerable than the very excesses of a *despotism*, and in general, much further from any remedy.

Thus, my Lord, we have pursued *aristocracy* through its whole progress ; we have seen the seeds, the growth, and the fruit. It could boast none of the advantages of a *despotism*, miserable as those advantages were, and it was overloaded

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with an exuberance of mischiefs, unknown even to *despotism* itself. In effect, it is no more than a disorderly tyranny. This form therefore could be little approved, even in speculation, by those who were capable of thinking, and could be less borne in practice by any who were capable of feeling. However, the fruitful policy of man was not yet exhausted. He had yet another farthing-candle to supply the deficiencies of the sun. This was the third form, known by political writers under the name of *democracy*. Here the people transacted all publick business, or the greater part of it, in their own persons: their laws were made by themselves, and upon any failure of duty, their officers were accountable to themselves, and to them only. In all appearance, they had secured by this method the advantages of order and good government, without paying their liberty for the purchase. Now, my Lord, we are come to the master-piece of Grecian refinement, and Roman solidity, a popular government. The earliest and most celebrated republick of this model, was that of Athens. It was constructed by no less an artist, than the celebrated poet and philosopher, Solon. But no sooner was this political vessel launched from the stocks, than it overset, even in the life-time of the builder. A tyranny immediately supervened; not by a foreign conquest, not by accident, but by the very nature and constitution of a *democracy*. An artful man became popular, the people had power in their hands, and they devolved a considerable share of their power upon their favourite; and the only use he made of this power, was to plunge those who gave it into slavery. Accident restored their liberty, and the same good fortune produced men of uncommon abilities and uncommon virtues amongst them. But these abilities were suffered to be of little service either to their possessors or to the state. Some of these men, for whose sakes alone we read their history, they banished; others they imprisoned; and all they treated with various circumstances of the most shameful ingratitude. Republicks have many things in the spirit of absolute monarchy, but none more than this; a shining merit is ever hated or suspected in a popular assembly, as well as in a court; and all services done the state, are looked upon as dangerous to the

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rulers, whether sultans or senators. The *Ostracism* at Athens was built upon this principle. The giddy people, whom we have now under consideration, being elated with some flashes of success, which they owed to nothing less than any merit of their own, began to tyrannize over their equals, who had associated with them for their common defence. With their prudence they renounced all appearance of justice. They entered into wars rashly and wantonly. If they were unsuccessful, instead of growing wiser by their misfortune, they threw the whole blame of their own misconduct on the ministers who had advised, and the generals who had conducted those wars; until by degrees they had cut off all who could serve them in their councils or their battles. If at any time these wars had an happy issue, it was no less difficult to deal with them on account of their pride and insolence. Furious in their adversity, tyrannical in their successes, a commander had more trouble to concert his defence before the people, than to plan the operations of the campaign. It was not uncommon for a general, under the horrid *despotism* of the Roman emperors, to be ill received in proportion to the greatness of his services. Agricola is a strong instance of this. No man had done greater things, nor with more honest ambition. Yet on his return to court, he was obliged to enter Rome with all the secrecy of a criminal. He went to the palace, not like a victorious commander who had merited and might demand the greatest rewards, but like an offender who had come to supplicate a pardon for his crimes. His reception was answerable: "*Brevi osculo, et nullo sermone exceptus, turbæ servientium inmistus est.*" Yet in that worst season of this worst of monarchical* tyrannies, modesty, discretion, and a coolness of temper, formed some kind of security even for the highest merit. But at Athens, the nicest and best studied behaviour was not a sufficient guard for a man of great capacity. Some of their bravest commanders were obliged to fly their country, some to enter into the service of its enemies, rather than abide a popular determination on their conduct, lest, as one of them said, their giddi-

* Sciant quibus moris illicita mirari, posse etiam sub malis principibus magnos viros, &c. See 42 to the end of it.

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ness might make the people condemn where they meant to acquit; to throw in a black bean even when they intended a white one.

The Athenians made a very rapid progress to the most enormous excesses. The people under no restraint soon grew dissolute, luxurious, and idle. They renounced all labour, and began to subsist themselves from the publick revenues. They lost all concern for their common honour or safety, and could bear no advice that tended to reform them. At this time truth became offensive to those lords the people, and most highly dangerous to the speaker. The orators no longer ascended the *rostrum*, but to corrupt them further with the most fulsome adulation. These orators were all bribed by foreign princes on the one side or the other. And besides its own parties, in this city there were parties, and avowed ones too, for the Persians, Spartans, and Macedonians, supported each of them by one or more demagogues pensioned and bribed to this iniquitous service. The people, forgetful of all virtue and publick spirit, and intoxicated with the flatteries of their orators (these courtiers of republicks, and endowed with the distinguishing characteristicks of all other courtiers) this people, I say, at last arrived at that pitch of madness, that they coolly and deliberately, by an express law, made it capital for any man to propose an application of the immense sums squandered in publick shows, even to the most necessary purposes of the state. When you see the people of this republick banishing and murdering their best and ablest citizens, dissipating the publick treasure with the most senseless extravagance, and spending their whole time, as spectators or actors, in playing, fiddling, dancing and singing, does it not, my lord, strike your imagination with the image of a sort of complex Nero? And does it not strike you with the greater horrour, when you observe, not one man only, but a whole city, grown drunk with pride and power, running with a rage of folly into the same mean and senseless debauchery and extravagance? But if this people resembled Nero in their extravagance, much more did they resemble and even exceed him in cruelty and injustice. In the time of Pericles, one of the most celebrated times in the



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history of that commonwealth, a King of Egypt sent them a donation of corn. This they were mean enough to accept. And had the Egyptian prince intended the ruin of this city of wicked bedlamites, he could not have taken a more effectual method to do it, than by such an ensnaring largess. The distribution of this bounty caused a quarrel; the majority set on foot an enquiry into the title of the citizens; and upon a vain pretence of illegitimacy, newly and occasionally set up, they deprived of their share of the royal donation no less than five thousand of their own body. They went further; they disfranchised them; and having once begun with an act of injustice, they could set no bounds to it. Not content with cutting them off from the rights of citizens, they plundered these unfortunate wretches of all their substance; and to crown this master-piece of violence and tyranny, they actually sold every man of the five thousand as slaves in the publick market. Observe, my Lord, that the five thousand we here speak of, were cut off from a body of no more than nineteen thousand; for the entire number of citizens was no greater at that time. Could the tyrant who wished the Roman people but one neck; could the tyrant Caligula himself have done, nay, he could scarcely wish for, a greater mischief, than to have cut off, at one stroke, a fourth of his people? Or has the cruelty of that series of sanguine tyrants, the Cæsars, ever presented such a piece of flagrant and extensive wickedness? The whole history of this celebrated republick is but one tissue of rashness, folly, ingratitude, injustice, tumult, violence, and tyranny, and indeed of every species of wickedness that can well be imagined. This was a city of wise men, in which a minister could not exercise his functions; a warlike people, amongst whom a general did not dare either to gain or lose a battle; a learned nation in which a philosopher could not venture on a free inquiry. This was the city which banished Themistocles, starved Aristides, forced into exile Miltiades, drove out Anaxagoras, and poisoned Socrates. This was a city which changed the form of its government with the moon; eternal conspiracies, revolutions daily, nothing fixed and established. A republick, as an ancient philosopher has observed, is no one species of

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government, but a magazine of every species; here you find every sort of it, and that in the worst form. As there is a perpetual change, one rising and the other falling, you have all the violence and wicked policy, by which a beginning power must always acquire its strength, and all the weakness by which falling states are brought to a complete destruction. Rome has a more venerable aspect than Athens; and she conducted her affairs, so far as related to the ruin and oppression of the greatest part of the world, with greater wisdom and more uniformity. But the domestick œconomy of these two states was nearly or altogether the same. An internal dissension constantly tore to pieces the bowels of the Roman commonwealth. You find the same confusion, the same factions, which subsisted at Athens, the same tumults, the same revolutions, and in fine, the same slavery; if perhaps their former condition did not deserve that name altogether as well. All other republicks were of the same character. Florence was a transcript of Athens. And the modern republicks, as they approach more or less to the democratick form, partake more or less of the nature of those which I have described.

We are now at the close of our review of the three simple forms of artificial society, and we have shewn them, however they may differ in name, or in some slight circumstances, to be all alike in effect; in effect, to be all tyrannies. But suppose we were inclined to make the most ample concessions; let us concede Athens, Rome, Carthage, and two or three more of the ancient, and as many of the modern commonwealths, to have been, or to be, free and happy, and to owe their freedom and happiness to their political constitution. Yet allowing all this, what defence does this make for artificial society in general, that these inconsiderable spots of the globe have for some short space of time stood as exceptions to a charge so general? But when we call these governments free, or concede that their citizens were happier than those which lived under different forms, it is merely *ex abundanti*. For we should be greatly mistaken, if we really thought that the majority of the people which filled these cities, enjoyed even that nominal political freedom of which

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I have spoken so much already. In reality, they had no part of it. In Athens there were usually from ten to thirty thousand freemen: this was the utmost. But the slaves usually amounted to four hundred thousand, and sometimes to a great many more. The freemen of Sparta and Rome were not more numerous in proportion to those whom they held in a slavery, even more terrible than the Athenian. Therefore state the matter fairly: the free states never formed, though they were taken altogether, the thousandth part of the habitable globe; the freemen in these states were never the twentieth part of the people, and the time they subsisted is scarce any thing in that immense ocean of duration in which time and slavery are so nearly commensurate. Therefore call these free states, or popular governments, or what you please; when we consider the majority of their inhabitants, and regard the natural rights of mankind, they must appear in reality and truth, no better than pitiful and oppressive oligarchies.

After so fair an examen, wherein nothing has been exaggerated; no fact produced which cannot be proved, and none which has been produced in any wise forced or strained, while thousands have, for brevity, been omitted; after so candid a discussion in all respects; what slave so passive, what bigot so blind, what enthusiast so headlong, what politician so hardened, as to stand up in defence of a system calculated for a curse to mankind? a curse under which they smart and groan to this hour, without thoroughly knowing the nature of the disease, and wanting understanding or courage to supply the remedy.

I need not excuse myself to your Lordship, nor, I think, to any honest man, for the zeal I have shewn in this cause; for it is an honest zeal, and in a good cause. I have defended natural religion against a confederacy of atheists and divines. I now plead for natural society against politicians, and for natural reason against all three. When the world is in a fitter temper than it is at present to hear truth, or when I shall be more indifferent about its temper; my thoughts may become more publick. In the mean time, let them repose in my own bosom, and in the bosoms of such

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men as are fit to be initiated in the sober mysteries of truth and reason. My antagonists have already done as much as I could desire. Parties in religion and politicks make sufficient discoveries concerning each other, to give a sober man a proper caution against them all. The monarchick, and aristocratical, and popular partisans have been jointly laying their axes to the root of all government, and have in their turns proved each other absurd and inconvenient. In vain you tell me that artificial government is good, but that I fall out only with the abuse. The thing! the thing itself is the abuse! Observe, my Lord, I pray you, that grand errour upon which all artificial legislative power is founded. It was observed, that men had ungovernable passions, which made it necessary to guard against the violence they might offer to each other. They appointed governours over them for this reason! but a worse and more perplexing difficulty arises, how to be defended against the governours? *Quis custodiet ipsos custodes?* In vain they change from a single person to a few. These few have the passions of the one, and they unite to strengthen themselves, and secure the gratification of their lawless passions at the expense of the general good. In vain do we fly to the many. The case is worse; their passions are less under the government of reason, they are augmented by the contagion, and defended against all attacks by their multitude.

I have purposely avoided the mention of the mixed form of government, for reasons that will be very obvious to your Lordship. But my caution can avail me but little. You will not fail to urge it against me in favour of political society. You will not fail to show how the errors of the several simple modes are corrected by a mixture of all of them, and a proper balance of the several powers in such a state. I confess, my Lord, that this has been long a darling mistake of my own; and that of all the sacrifices I have made to truth, this has been by far the greatest. When I confess that I think this notion a mistake, I know to whom I am speaking, for I am satisfied that reasons are like liquors, and there are some of such a nature as none but strong heads can bear. There are few with whom I can communicate so free-

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ly as with Pope. But Pope cannot bear every truth. He has a timidity which hinders the full exertion of his faculties, almost as effectually as bigotry cramps those of the general herd of mankind. But whoever is a genuine follower of truth, keeps his eye steady upon his guide, indifferent whither he is led, provided that she is the leader. And, my Lord, if it be properly considered, it were infinitely better to remain possessed by the whole legion of vulgar mistakes, than to reject some, and at the same time to retain a fondness for others altogether as absurd and irrational. The first has at least a consistency, that makes a man, however erroneously, uniform at least; but the latter way of proceeding is such an inconsistent chimera and jumble of philosophy, and vulgar prejudice, that hardly any thing more ridiculous can be conceived. Let us therefore freely, and without fear or prejudice, examine this last contrivance of policy. And without considering how near the quick our instruments may come, let us search it to the bottom.

First then, all men are agreed that this junction of regal, aristocratick, and popular power, must form a very complex, nice, and intricate machine, which being composed of such a variety of parts, with such opposite tendencies and movements, it must be liable on every accident to be disordered. To speak without metaphor, such a government must be liable to frequent cabals, tumults, and revolutions, from its very constitution. These are undoubtedly as ill effects as can happen in a society; for in such a case, the closeness acquired by community, instead of serving for mutual defence, serves only to increase the danger. Such a system is like a city, where trades that require constant fires are much exercised, where the houses are built of combustible materials, and where they stand extremely close.

In the second place, the several constituent parts having their distinct rights, and these many of them so necessary to be determined with exactness, are yet so indeterminate in their nature, that it becomes a new and constant source of debate and confusion. Hence it is, that whilst the business of government should be carrying on, the question is, Who has a right to exercise this or that function of it, or what

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men have power to keep their offices in any function? Whilst this contest continues, and whilst the balance in any sort continues, it has never any remission; all manner of abuses and villanies in officers remain unpunished; the greatest frauds and robberies in the publick revenues are committed in defiance of justice; and abuses grow, by time and impunity, into customs; until they prescribe against the laws, and grow too inveterate often to admit a cure, unless such as may be as bad as the disease.

Thirdly, the several parts of this species of government, though united, preserve the spirit which each form has separately. Kings are ambitious; the nobility haughty; and the populace tumultuous and ungovernable. Each party, however, in appearance peaceable, carries on a design upon the others; and it is owing to this, that in all questions, whether concerning foreign or domestick affairs, the whole generally turns more upon some party-matter than upon the nature of the thing itself; whether such a step will diminish or augment the power of the crown, or how far the privileges of the subject are like to be extended or restricted by it. And these questions are constantly resolved, without any consideration of the merits of the cause, merely as the parties who uphold these jarring interests may chance to prevail; and as they prevail, the balance is overset, now upon one side, now upon the other. The government is one day, arbitrary power in a single person; another, a juggling confederacy of a few to cheat the prince and enslave the people; and the third, a frantick and unmanageable democracy. The great instrument of all these changes, and what infuses a peculiar venom into all of them, is party. It is of no consequence what the principles of any party, or what their pretensions are; the spirit which actuates all parties is the same; the spirit of ambition, of self-interest, of oppression, and treachery. This spirit entirely reverses all the principles which a benevolent nature has erected within us; all honesty, all equal justice, and even the ties of natural society, the natural affections. In a word, my Lord, we have all *seen*, and if any outward considerations were worthy the lasting concern of a wise man, we have some of us *felt*, such oppression

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from party government as no other tyranny can parallel. We behold daily the most important rights, rights upon which all the others depend, we behold these rights determined in the last resort, without the least attention even to the appearance or colour of justice; we behold this without emotion, because we have grown up in the constant view of such practices; and we are not surprised to hear a man requested to be a knave and a traitor, with as much indifference as if the most ordinary favour were asked; and we hear this request refused, not because it is a most unjust and unreasonable desire, but that this worthy has already engaged his injustice to another. These and many more points I am far from spreading to their full extent. You are sensible that I do not put forth half my strength; and you cannot be at a loss for the reason. A man is allowed sufficient freedom of thought, provided he knows how to choose his subject properly. You may criticise freely upon the Chinese constitution, and observe with as much severity as you please upon the absurd tricks, or destructive bigotry of the bonzees. But the scene is changed as you come homeward, and atheism or treason may be the names given in Britain, to what would be reason and truth if asserted of China. I submit to the condition, and though I have a notorious advantage before me, I wave the pursuit. For else, my Lord, it is very obvious what a picture might be drawn of the excesses of party even in our own nation. I could shew, that the same faction has in one reign promoted popular seditions, and in the next been a patron of tyranny; I could shew, that they have all of them betrayed the publick safety at all times, and have very frequently with equal perfidy made a market of their own cause, and their own associates. I could shew how vehemently they have contended for names, and how silently they have passed over things of the last importance. And I could demonstrate, that they have had the opportunity of doing all this mischief, nay, that they themselves had their origin and growth from that complex form of government, which we are wisely taught to look upon as so great a blessing. Revolve, my Lord, our history from the conquest. We scarce ever had a prince, who by fraud, or violence, had not made some in-

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fringement on the constitution. We scarce ever had a parliament which knew, when it attempted to set limits to the royal authority, how to set limits to its own. Evils we have had continually calling for reformation, and reformations more grievous than any evils. Our boasted liberty sometimes trodden down, sometimes giddily set up, and ever precariously fluctuating and unsettled; it has only been kept alive by the blasts of continual feuds, wars, and conspiracies. In no country in Europe has the scaffold so often blushed with the blood of its nobility. Confiscations, banishments, attainders, executions, make a large part of the history of such of our families as are not utterly extinguished by them. Formerly indeed things had a more ferocious appearance than they have at this day. In these early and unrefined ages, the jarring parts of a certain chaotick constitution supported their several pretensions by the sword. Experience and policy have since taught other methods.

At nunc res agitur tenui pulmone rubetæ.

But how far corruption, venality, the contempt of honour, the oblivion of all duty to our country, and the most abandoned publick prostitution, are preferable to the more glaring and violent effects of faction, I will not presume to determine. Sure I am that they are very great evils.

I have done with the forms of government. During the course of my enquiry you may have observed a very material difference between my manner of reasoning and that which is in use amongst the abettors of artificial society. They form their plans upon what seems most eligible to their imaginations, for the ordering of mankind. I discover the mistakes in those plans, from the real known consequences which have resulted from them. They have inlisted reason to fight against itself, and employ its whole force to prove that it is an insufficient guide to them in the conduct of their lives. But unhappily for us, in proportion as we have deviated from the plain rule of our nature, and turned our reason against itself, in that proportion have we increased the follies and miseries of mankind. The more deeply we penetrate



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into the labyrinth of art, the further we find ourselves from those ends for which we entered it. This has happened in almost every species of artificial society, and in all times. We found, or we thought we found, an inconvenience in having every man the judge of his own cause. Therefore judges were set up, at first with discretionary powers. But it was soon found a miserable slavery to have our lives and properties precarious, and hanging upon the arbitrary determination of any one man, or set of men. We flew to laws as a remedy for this evil. By these we persuaded ourselves we might know with some certainty upon what ground we stood. But lo! differences arose upon the sense and interpretation of these laws. Thus we were brought back to our old incertitude. New laws were made to expound the old; and new difficulties arose upon the new laws; as words multiplied, opportunities of cavilling upon them multiplied also. Then recourse was had to notes, comments, glosses, reports, *responsa prudentum*, learned readings: eagle stood against eagle: authority was set up against authority. Some were allured by the modern, others reverenced the antient. The new were more enlightened, the old were more venerable. Some adopted the comment, others stuck to the text. The confusion increased, the mist thickened, until it could be discovered no longer what was allowed or forbidden, what things were in property, and what common. In this uncertainty, (uncertain even to the professors, an Egyptian darkness to the rest of mankind) the contending parties felt themselves more effectually ruined by the delay than they could have been by the injustice of any decision. Our inheritances are become a prize for disputation; and disputes and litigations are become an inheritance.

The professors of artificial law have always walked hand in hand with the professors of artificial theology. As their end, in confounding the reason of man, and abridging his natural freedom, is exactly the same, they have adjusted the means to that end in a way entirely similar. The divine thunders out his *anathemas* with more noise and terrour against the breach of one of his positive institutions, or the neglect of some of his trivial forms, than against the neglect

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or breach of those duties and commandments of natural religion, which by these forms and institutions he pretends to enforce. The lawyer has his forms, and his positive institutions too, and he adheres to them with a veneration altogether as religious. The worst cause cannot be so prejudicial to the litigant, as his advocate's or attorney's ignorance or neglect of these forms. A law-suit is like an ill-managed dispute, in which the first object is soon out of sight, and the parties end upon a matter wholly foreign to that on which they began. In a law-suit the question is, who has a right to a certain house or farm? And this question is daily determined, not upon the evidence of the right, but upon the observance or neglect of some forms of words in use with the gentlemen of the robe, about which there is even amongst themselves such a disagreement, that the most experienced veterans in the profession can never be positively assured that they are not mistaken.

Let us expostulate with these learned sages, these priests of the sacred temple of justice. Are we judges of our own property? By no means. You then, who are initiated into the mysteries of the blindfold goddess, inform me whether I have a right to eat the bread I have earned by the hazard of my life, or the sweat of my brow? The grave doctor answers me in the affirmative; the reverend serjeant replies in the negative; the learned barrister reasons upon one side and upon the other, and concludes nothing. What shall I do? An antagonist starts up and presses me hard. I enter the field, and retain these three persons to defend my cause. My cause, which two farmers from the plough could have decided in half an hour, takes the court twenty years. I am however at the end of my labour, and have in reward for all my toil and vexation, a judgment in my favour. But hold—a sagacious commander, in the adversary's army, has found a flaw in the proceeding. My triumph is turned into mourning. I have used *or*, instead of *and*, or some mistake, small in appearance, but dreadful in its consequences, and have the whole of my success quashed in a writ of errour. I remove my suit; I shift from court to court; I fly from equity to law, and from law to equity; equal un-

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certainty attends me every where; and a mistake in which I had no share, decides at once upon my liberty and property, sending me from the court to a prison, and adjudging my family to beggary and famine. I am innocent, gentlemen, of the darkness and uncertainty of your science. I never darkened it with absurd and contradictory notions, nor confounded it with chichane and sophistry. You have excluded me from any share in the conduct of my own cause; the science was too deep for me; I acknowledged it; but it was too deep even for yourselves: you have made the way so intricate, that you are yourselves lost in it; you err, and you punish me for your errours.

The delay of the law is, your Lordship will tell me, a trite topick, and which of its abuses have not been too severely felt not to be complained of? A man's property is to serve for the purposes of his support; and therefore to delay a determination concerning that, is the worst injustice, because it cuts off the very end and purpose for which I applied to the judicature for relief. Quite contrary in the case of a man's life; there the determination can hardly be too much protracted. Mistakes in this case are as often fallen into as many other, and if the judgment is sudden, the mistakes are the most irretrievable of all others. Of this the gentlemen of the robe are themselves sensible, and they have brought it into a maxim. *De morte hominis nulla est cunctatio longa.* But what could have induced them to reverse the rules, and to contradict that reason which dictated them, I am utterly unable to guess. A point concerning property, which ought, for the reasons I just mentioned, to be most speedily decided, frequently exercises the wit of successions of lawyers, for many generations. *Multa virûm volvens durando sæcula vincit.* But the question concerning a man's life, that great question in which no delay ought to be counted tedious, is commonly determined in twenty-four hours at the utmost. It is not to be wondered at, that injustice and absurdity should be inseparable companions.

Ask of politicians the end for which laws were originally designed; and they will answer, that the laws were designed as a protection for the poor and weak, against the oppres-

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sion of the rich and powerful. But surely no pretence can be so ridiculous; a man might as well tell me he has taken off my load, because he has changed the burden. If the poor man is not able to support his suit, according to the vexatious and expensive manner established in civilized countries, has not the rich as great an advantage over him as the strong has over the weak in a state of nature? But we will not place the state of nature, which is the reign of God, in competition with political society, which is the absurd usurpation of man. In a state of nature, it is true, that a man of superior force may beat or rob me; but then it is true, that I am at full liberty to defend myself, or make reprisal by surprise, or by cunning, or by any other way in which I may be superior to him. But in political society, a rich man may rob me in another way. I cannot defend myself; for money is the only weapon with which we are allowed to fight. And if I attempt to avenge myself, the whole force of that society is ready to complete my ruin.

A good parson once said, that where mystery begins, religion ends. Cannot I say, as truly at least of human laws, that where mystery begins, justice ends? It is hard to say, whether the doctors of law or divinity have made the greater advances in the lucrative business of mystery. The lawyers, as well as the theologians, have erected another reason besides natural reason; and the result has been, another justice besides natural justice. They have so bewildered the world and themselves in unmeaning forms and ceremonies, and so perplexed the plainest matters with metaphysical jargon, that it carries the highest danger to a man out of that profession, to make the least step without their advice and assistance. Thus by confining to themselves the knowledge of the foundation of all men's lives and properties, they have reduced all mankind into the most abject and servile dependence. We are tenants at the will of these gentlemen for every thing; and a metaphysical quibble is to decide whether the greatest villain breathing shall meet his deserts, or escape with impunity, or whether the best man in the society shall not be reduced to the lowest and most despicable condition it affords. In a word, my Lord, the

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injustice, delay, puerility, false refinement, and affected mystery of the law are such, that many who live under it come to admire and envy the expedition, simplicity, and equality of arbitrary judgments. I need insist the less on this article to your Lordship, as you have frequently lamented the miseries derived to us from artificial law, and your candour is the more to be admired and applauded in this, as your Lordship's noble house has derived its wealth and its honour from that profession.

Before we finish our examination of artificial society, I shall lead your Lordship into a closer consideration of the relations which it gives birth to, and the benefits, if such they are, which result from these relations. The most obvious division of society is into rich and poor; and it is no less obvious, that the number of the former bear a great disproportion to those of the latter. The whole business of the poor is to administer to the idleness, folly, and luxury of the rich; and that of the rich, in return, is to find the best methods of confirming the slavery and increasing the burdens of the poor. In a state of nature, it is an invariable law, that a man's acquisitions are in proportion to his labours. In a state of artificial society, it is a law as constant and as invariable, that those who labour most, enjoy the fewest things; and that those who labour not at all, have the greatest number of enjoyments. A constitution of things this, strange and ridiculous beyond expression. We scarce believe a thing when we are told it, which we actually see before our eyes every day without being in the least surprised. I suppose that there are in Great-Britain upwards of an hundred thousand people employed in lead, tin, iron, copper, and coal mines; these unhappy wretches scarce ever see the light of the sun; they are buried in the bowels of the earth; there they work at a severe and dismal task, without the least prospect of being delivered from it; they subsist upon the coarsest and worst sort of fare; they have their health miserably impaired, and their lives cut short, by being perpetually confined in the close vapour of these malignant minerals. An hundred thousand more at least are tortured without remission by the suffocating smoke, intense fires, and constant

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drudgery necessary in refining and managing the products of those mines. If any man informed us that two hundred thousand innocent persons were condemned to so intolerable slavery, how should we pity the unhappy sufferers, and how great would be our just indignation against those who inflicted so cruel and ignominious a punishment! This is an instance, I could not wish a stronger, of the numberless things which we pass by in their common dress, yet which shock us when they are nakedly represented. But this number, considerable as it is, and the slavery, with all its baseness and horrour, which we have at home, is nothing to what the rest of the world affords of the same nature. Millions daily bathed in the poisonous damps and destructive effluvia of lead, silver, copper, and arsenick. To say nothing of those other employments, those stations of wretchedness and contempt, in which civil society has placed the numerous *enfans perdus* of her army. Would any rational man submit to one of the most tolerable of these drudgeries, for all the artificial enjoyments which policy has made to result from them? By no means. And yet need I suggest to your Lordship, that those who find the means, and those who arrive at the end, are not at all the same persons. On considering the strange and unaccountable fancies and contrivances of artificial reason, I have somewhere called this earth the Bedlam of our system. Looking now upon the effects of some of those fancies, may we not with equal reason call it likewise the Newgate and the Bridewell of the universe? Indeed the blindness of one part of mankind co-operating with the phrenzy and villany of the other, has been the real builder of this respectable fabrick of political society: and as the blindness of mankind has caused their slavery, in return their state of slavery is made a pretence for continuing them in a state of blindness; for the politician will tell you gravely, that their life of servitude disqualifies the greater part of the race of man for a search of truth, and supplies them with no other than mean and insufficient ideas. This is but too true; and this is one of the reasons for which I blame such institutions.

In a misery of this sort, admitting some few lenitives, and those too but a few, nine parts in ten of the whole race of

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mankind drudge through life. It may be urged perhaps, in palliation of this, that, at least, the rich few find a considerable and real benefit from the wretchedness of the many. But is this so in fact? Let us examine the point with a little more attention. For this purpose the rich in all societies may be thrown into two classes. The first is of those who are powerful as well as rich, and conduct the operations of the vast political machine. The other is of those who employ their riches wholly in the acquisition of pleasure. As to the first sort, their continual care and anxiety, their toilsome days, and sleepless nights, are next to proverbial. These circumstances are sufficient almost to level their condition to that of the unhappy majority; but there are other circumstances which place them in a far lower condition. Not only their understandings labour continually, which is the severest labour, but their hearts are torn by the worst, most troublesome, and insatiable of all passions, by avarice, by ambition, by fear and jealousy. No part of the mind has rest. Power gradually extirpates from the mind every humane and gentle virtue. Pity, benevolence, friendship are things almost unknown in high stations. *Veræ amicitiæ rarissime inveniuntur in iis qui in honoribus reque publica versantur*, says Cicero. And indeed, courts are the schools where cruelty, pride, dissimulation and treachery are studied and taught in the most vicious perfection. This is a point so clear and acknowledged, that if it did not make a necessary part of my subject, I should pass it by entirely. And this has hindered me from drawing at full length, and in the most striking colours, this shocking picture of the degeneracy and wretchedness of human nature, in that part which is vulgarly thought its happiest and most amiable state. You know from what originals I could copy such pictures. Happy are they who know enough of them to know the little value of the possessors of such things, and of all that they possess; and happy they who have been snatched from that post of danger which they occupy, with the remains of their virtue; loss of honours, wealth, titles, and even the loss of one's country, is nothing in balance with so great an advantage.

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Let us now view the other species of the rich, those who devote their time and fortunes to idleness and pleasure. How much happier are they? The pleasures which are agreeable to nature are within the reach of all, and therefore can form no distinction in favour of the rich. The pleasures which art forces up are seldom sincere, and never satisfying. What is worse, this constant application to pleasure takes away from the enjoyment, or rather turns it into the nature of a very burdensome and laborious business. It has consequences much more fatal. It produces a weak valetudinary state of body, attended by all those horrid disorders, and yet more horrid methods of cure, which are the result of luxury on one hand, and the weak and ridiculous efforts of human art on the other. The pleasures of such men are scarcely felt as pleasures; at the same time that they bring on pains and diseases, which are felt but too severely. The mind has its share of the misfortune; it grows lazy and enervate, unwilling and unable to search for truth, and utterly uncapable of knowing, much less of relishing real happiness. The poor by their excessive labour, and the rich by their enormous luxury, are set upon a level, and rendered equally ignorant of any knowledge which might conduce to their happiness. A dismal view of the interior of all civil society! The lower part broken and ground down by the most cruel oppression; and the rich by their artificial method of life bringing worse evils on themselves, than their tyranny could possibly inflict on those below them. Very different is the prospect of the natural state. Here there are no wants which nature gives, and in this state men can be sensible of no other wants, which are not to be supplied by a very moderate degree of labour; therefore there is no slavery. Neither is there any luxury, because no single man can supply the materials of it. Life is simple, and therefore it is happy.

I am conscious, my Lord, that your politician will urge in his defence, that this unequal state is highly useful. That without dooming some part of mankind to extraordinary toil, the arts which cultivate life could not be exercised. But I demand of this politician, how such arts came to be necessary? He answers, that civil society could not well exist with-



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out them. So that these arts are necessary to civil society, and civil society necessary again to these arts. Thus are we running in a circle, without modesty, and without end, and making one errour and extravagance an excuse for the other. My sentiments about these arts and their cause, I have often discoursed with my friends at large. Pope has expressed them in good verse, where he talks with so much force of reason and elegance of language, in praise of the state of nature:

> Then was not pride, nor arts that pride to aid,
> Man walk'd with beast, joint-tenant of the shade.

On the whole, my Lord, if political society, in whatever form, has still made the many the property of the few; if it has introduced labours unnecessary, vices and diseases unknown, and pleasures incompatible with nature; if in all countries it abridges the lives of millions, and renders those of millions more utterly abject and miserable, shall we still worship so destructive an idol, and daily sacrifice to it our health, our liberty, and our peace? Or shall we pass by this monstrous heap of absurd notions, and abominable practices, thinking we have sufficiently discharged our duty in exposing the trifling cheats, and ridiculous juggles of a few mad, designing, or ambitious priests? Alas! my Lord, we labour under a mortal consumption, whilst we are so anxious about the cure of a sore finger. For has not this leviathan of civil power overflowed the earth with a deluge of blood, as if he were made to disport and play therein? We have shewn, that political society, on a moderate calculation, has been the means of murdering several times the number of inhabitants now upon the earth, during its short existence, not upwards of four thousand years in any accounts to be depended on. But we have said nothing of the other, and perhaps as bad consequence of these wars, which have spilled such seas of blood, and reduced so many millions to a merciless slavery. But these are only the ceremonies performed in the porch of the political temple. Much more horrid ones are seen as you enter it. The several species of

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government vie with each other in the absurdity of their constitutions, and the oppression which they make their subjects endure. Take them under what form you please, they are in effect but a despotism, and they fall, both in effect and appearance too, after a very short period, into that cruel and detestable species of tyranny; which I rather call it, because we have been educated under another form, than that this is of worse consequences to mankind. For the free governments, for the point of their space, and the moment of their duration, have felt more confusion, and committed more flagrant acts of tyranny, than the most perfect despotick governments which we have ever known. Turn your eye next to the labyrinth of the law, and the iniquity conceived in its intricate recesses. Consider the ravages committed in the bowels of all commonwealths by ambition, by avarice, envy, fraud, open injustice, and pretended friendship; vices which could draw little support from a state of nature, but which blossom and flourish in the rankness of political society. Revolve our whole discourse; add to it all those reflections which your own good understanding shall suggest, and make a strenuous effort beyond the reach of vulgar philosophy, to confess that the cause of artificial society is more defenceless even than that of artificial religion; that it is as derogatory from the honour of the Creator, as subversive of human reason, and productive of infinitely more mischief to the human race.

If pretended revelations have caused wars where they were opposed, and slavery where they were received, the pretended wise inventions of politicians have done the same. But the slavery has been much heavier, the wars far more bloody, and both more universal by many degrees. Shew me any mischief produced by the madness or wickedness of theologians, and I will shew you an hundred, resulting from the ambition and villany of conquerors and statesmen. Shew me an absurdity in religion, and I will undertake to shew you an hundred for one in political laws and institutions. If you say, that natural religion is a sufficient guide without the foreign aid of revelation, on what principle should political laws become necessary? Is not the same

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reason available in theology and in politicks? If the laws of nature are the laws of God, is it consistent with the divine wisdom to prescribe rules to us, and leave the enforcement of them to the folly of human institutions? Will you follow truth but to a certain point?

We are indebted for all our miseries to our distrust of that guide, which Providence thought sufficient for our condition, our own natural reason, which rejecting both in human and divine things, we have given our necks to the yoke of political and theological slavery. We have renounced the prerogative of man, and it is no wonder that we should be treated like beasts. But our misery is much greater than theirs, as the crime we commit in rejecting the lawful dominion of our reason is greater than any which they can commit. If after all, you should confess all these things, yet plead the necessity of political institutions, weak and wicked as they are, I can argue with equal, perhaps superiour force concerning the necessity of artificial religion; and every step you advance in your argument, you add a strength to mine. So that if we are resolved to submit our reason and our liberty to civil usurpation, we have nothing to do but to conform as quietly as we can to the vulgar notions which are connected with this, and take up the theology of the vulgar as well as their politicks. But if we think this necessity rather imaginary than real, we should renounce their dreams of society, together with their visions of religion and vindicate ourselves into perfect liberty.

You are, my Lord, but just entering into the world; I am going out of it. I have played long enough to be heartily tired of the drama. Whether I have acted my part in it well or ill, posterity will judge with more candour than I, or than the present age, with our present passions, can possibly pretend to. For my part, I quit it without a sigh, and submit to the sovereign order without murmuring. The nearer we approach to the goal of life, the better we begin to understand the true value of our existence, and the real weight of our opinions. We set out much in love with both; but we leave much behind us as we advance. We first throw away the tales along with the rattles of our nurs-

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es ; those of the priest keep their hold a little longer ; those of our governours the longest of all. But the passions which prop these opinions are withdrawn one after another ; and the cool light of reason at the setting of our life, shews us what a false splendour played upon these objects during our more sanguine seasons. Happy, my Lord, if instructed by my experience, and even by my errours, you come early to make such an estimate of things, as may give freedom and ease to your life. I am happy that such an estimate promises me comfort at my death.

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A

# PHILOSOPHICAL INQUIRY

INTO THE

ORIGIN OF OUR IDEAS

OF THE

# SUBLIME AND BEAUTIFUL.

WITH

*AN INTRODUCTORY DISCOURSE*

CONCERNING

# TASTE,

AND SEVERAL OTHER ADDITIONS.

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# INTRODUCTION.

## ON TASTE.

On a superficial view, we may seem to differ very widely from each other in our reasonings, and no less in our pleasures: but, notwithstanding this difference, which I think to be rather apparent than real, it is probable that the standard both of reason and taste is the same in all human creatures. For if there were not some principles of judgment as well as of sentiment common to all mankind, no hold could possibly be taken either on their reason or their passions, sufficient to maintain the ordinary correspondence of life. It appears indeed to be generally acknowledged, that with regard to truth and falsehood there is something fixed. We find people in their disputes continually appealing to certain tests and standards, which are allowed on all sides, and are supposed to be established in our common nature. But there is not the same obvious concurrence in any uniform or settled principles which relate to taste. It is even commonly supposed that this delicate and aërial faculty, which seems too volatile to endure even the chains of a definition, cannot be properly tried by any test, nor regulated by any standard. There is so continual a call for the exercise of the reasoning faculty, and it is so much strengthened by perpetual contention, that certain maxims of right reason seem to be tacitly settled amongst the most ignorant. The learned have improved on this rude science, and reduced those maxims into a system. If taste has not been so happily cultivated, it was not that the subject was barren, but that the labourers were few or negligent; for, to say the truth, there are not the same interesting motives to impel us to fix the one, which urge us to ascertain the other. And after all, if men differ in their opinion concerning such matters, their difference is not attended



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with the same important consequences; else I make no doubt but that the logick of taste, if I may be allowed the expression, might very possibly be as well digested, and we might come to discuss matters of this nature with as much certainty, as those which seem more immediately within the province of mere reason. And indeed, it is very necessary, at the entrance into such an inquiry as our present, to make this point as clear as possible; for if taste has no fixed principles, if the imagination is not affected according to some invariable and certain laws, our labour is like to be employed to very little purpose; as it must be judged an useless, if not an absurd undertaking, to lay down rules for caprice, and to set up for a legislator of whims and fancies.

The term taste, like all other figurative terms, is not extremely accurate; the thing which we understand by it, is far from a simple and determinate idea in the minds of most men, and it is therefore liable to uncertainty and confusion. I have no great opinion of a definition, the celebrated remedy for the cure of this disorder. For when we define, we seem in danger of circumscribing nature within the bounds of our own notions, which we often take up by hazard, or embrace on trust, or form out of a limited and partial consideration of the object before us, instead of extending our ideas to take in all that nature comprehends, according to her manner of combining. We are limited in our inquiry by the strict laws to which we have submitted at our setting out.

——Circa vilem patulumque morabimur orbem,
Unde pudor proferre pedem vetat aut operis lex.

A definition may be very exact, and yet go but a very little way towards informing us of the nature of the thing defined; but let the virtue of a definition be what it will, in the order of things, it seems rather to follow than to precede our inquiry, of which it ought to be considered as the result. It must be acknowledged that the methods of disquisition and teaching may be sometimes different, and on very good reason undoubtedly; but for my part, I am convinced that the method of teaching which approaches most nearly to the method of

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investigation, is incomparably the best; since, not content with serving up a few barren and lifeless truths, it leads to the stock on which they grew; it tends to set the reader himself in the track of invention, and to direct him into those paths in which the author has made his own discoveries, if he should be so happy as to have made any that are valuable.

But to cut off all pretence for cavilling, I mean by the word Taste no more than that faculty or those faculties of the mind, which are affected with, or which form a judgment of, the works of imagination and the elegant arts. This is, I think, the most general idea of that word, and what is the least connected with any particular theory. And my point in this inquiry is, to find whether there are any principles, on which the imagination is affected, so common to all, so grounded and certain, as to supply the means of reasoning satisfactorily about them. And such principles of taste I fancy there are; however paradoxical it may seem to those, who on a superficial view imagine, that there is so great a diversity of tastes, both in kind and degree, that nothing can be more indeterminate.

All the natural powers in man, which I know, that are conversant about external objects, are the senses; the imagination; and the judgment. And first with regard to the senses. We do and we must suppose, that as the conformation of their organs are nearly or altogether the same in all men, so the manner of perceiving external objects is in all men the same, or with little difference. We are satisfied that what appears to be light to one eye, appears light to another; that what seems sweet to one palate, is sweet to another; that what is dark and bitter to this man, is likewise dark and bitter to that; and we conclude in the same manner of great and little, hard and soft, hot and cold, rough and smooth; and indeed of all the natural qualities and affections of bodies. If we suffer ourselves to imagine, that their senses present to different men different images of things, this sceptical proceeding will make every sort of reasoning on every subject vain and frivolous, even that sceptical reasoning itself which had persuaded us to entertain

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a doubt concerning the agreement of our perceptions. But as there will be little doubt that bodies present similar images to the whole species, it must necessarily be allowed, that the pleasures and the pains which every object excites in one man, it must raise in all mankind, whilst it operates, naturally, simply, and by its proper powers only; for if we deny this, we must imagine that the same cause operating in the same manner, and on subjects of the same kind, will produce different effects, which would be highly absurd. Let us first consider this point in the sense of taste, and the rather as the faculty in question has taken its name from that sense. All men are agreed to call vinegar sour, honey sweet, and aloes bitter; and as they are all agreed in finding these qualities in those objects, they do not in the least differ concerning their effects with regard to pleasure and pain. They all concur in calling sweetness pleasant, and sourness and bitterness unpleasant. Here there is no diversity in their sentiments; and that there is not, appears fully from the consent of all men in the metaphors which are taken from the sense of taste. A sour temper, bitter expressions, bitter curses, a bitter fate, are terms well and strongly understood by all. And we are altogether as well understood when we say, a sweet disposition, a sweet person, a sweet condition, and the like. It is confessed, that custom and some other causes, have made many deviations from the natural pleasures or pains which belong to these several tastes; but then the power of distinguishing between the natural and the acquired relish remains to the very last. A man frequently comes to prefer the taste of tobacco to that of sugar, and the flavour of vinegar to that of milk; but this makes no confusion in tastes, whilst he is sensible that the tobacco and vinegar are not sweet, and whilst he knows that habit alone has reconciled his palate to these alien pleasures. Even with such a person we may speak, and with sufficient precision, concerning tastes. But should any man be found who declares, that to him tobacco has a taste like sugar, and that he cannot distinguish between milk and vinegar; or that tobacco and vinegar are sweet, milk bitter, and sugar sour; we immediately conclude that the organs

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of this man are out of order, and that his palate is utterly vitiated. We are as far from conferring with such a person upon tastes, as from reasoning concerning the relations of quantity with one who should deny that all the parts together were equal to the whole. We do not call a man of this kind wrong in his notions, but absolutely mad. Exceptions of this sort, in either way, do not at all impeach our general rule, nor make us conclude that men have various principles concerning the relations of quantity or the taste of things. So that when it is said, taste cannot be disputed, it can only mean, that no one can strictly answer what pleasure or pain some particular man may find from the taste of some particular thing. This indeed cannot be disputed; but we may dispute, and with sufficient clearness too, concerning the things which are naturally pleasing or disagreeable to the sense. But when we talk of any peculiar or acquired relish, then we must know the habits, the prejudices, or the distempers of this particular man, and we must draw our conclusion from those.

This agreement of mankind is not confined to the taste solely. The principle of pleasure derived from sight is the same in all. Light is more pleasing than darkness. Summer, when the earth is clad in green, when the heavens are serene and bright, is more agreeable than winter, when every thing makes a different appearance. I never remember that any thing beautiful, whether a man, a beast, a bird, or a plant, was ever shewn, though it were to an hundred people, that they did not all immediately agree that it was beautiful, though some might have thought that it fell short of their expectation, or that other things were still finer. I believe no man thinks a goose to be more beautiful than a swan, or imagines that what they call a Friezland hen excels a peacock. It must be observed too, that the pleasures of the sight are not near so complicated, and confused, and altered by unnatural habits and associations, as the pleasures of the taste are; because the pleasures of the sight more commonly acquiesce in themselves; and are not so often altered by considerations which are independent of the sight itself. But things do not spontaneously present themselves

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to the palate as they do to the sight; they are generally applied to it, either as food or as medicine; and from the qualities which they possess for nutritive or medicinal purposes, they often form the palate by degrees, and by force of these associations. Thus opium is pleasing to Turks, on account of the agreeable delirium it produces. Tobacco is the delight of Dutchmen, as it diffuses a torpor and pleasing stupefaction. Fermented spirits please our common people, because they banish care, and all consideration of future or present evils. All of these would lie absolutely neglected if their properties had originally gone no further than the taste; but all these, together with tea and coffee, and some other things, have passed from the apothecary's shop to our tables, and were taken for health long before they were thought of for pleasure. The effect of the drug has made us use it frequently; and frequent use, combined with the agreeable effect, has made the taste itself at last agreeable. But this does not in the least perplex our reasoning; because we distinguish to the last the acquired from the natural relish. In describing the taste of an unknown fruit, you would scarcely say that it had a sweet and pleasant flavour like tobacco, opium, or garlick, although you spoke to those who were in the constant use of these drugs, and had great pleasure in them. There is in all men a sufficient remembrance of the original natural causes of pleasure, to enable them to bring all things offered to their senses to that standard, and to regulate their feelings and opinions by it. Suppose one who had so vitiated his palate as to take more pleasure in the taste of opium than in that of butter or honey, to be presented with a bolus of squills; there is hardly any doubt but that he would prefer the butter or honey to this nauseous morsel, or to any other bitter drug to which he had not been accustomed; which proves that his palate was naturally like that of other men in all things, that it is still like the palate of other men in many things, and only vitiated in some particular points. For in judging of any new thing, even of a taste similar to that which he has been formed by habit to like, he finds his palate affected in the natural manner, and on the common principles. Thus the

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pleasure of all the senses, of the sight, and even of the taste, that most ambiguous of the senses, is the same in all, high and low, learned and unlearned.

Besides the ideas, with their annexed pains and pleasures, which are presented by the sense; the mind of man possess a sort of creative power of its own; either in representing at pleasure the images of things in the order and manner in which they were received by the senses, or in combining those images in a new manner, and according to a different order. This power is called imagination; and to this belongs whatever is called wit, fancy, invention, and the like. But it must be observed, that this power of the imagination is incapable of producing any thing absolutely new; it can only vary the disposition of those ideas which it has received from the senses. Now the imagination is the most extensive province of pleasure and pain, as it is the region of our fears and our hopes, and of all our passions that are connected with them; and whatever is calculated to affect the imagination with these commanding ideas, by force of any original natural impression, must have the same power pretty equally over all men. For since the imagination is only the representation of the senses, it can only be pleased or displeased with the images, from the same principle on which the sense is pleased or displeased with the realities; and consequently there must be just as close an agreement in the imaginations as in the senses of men. A little attention will convince us that this must of necessity be the case.

But in the imagination, besides the pain or pleasure arising from the properties of the natural object, a pleasure is perceived from the resemblance, which the imitation has to the original: the imagination, I conceive, can have no pleasure but what results from one or other of these causes. And these causes operate pretty uniformly upon all men, because they operate by principles in nature, and which are not derived from any particular habits or advantages. Mr. Locke very justly and finely observes of wit, that it is chiefly conversant in tracing resemblances: he remarks at the same time, that the business of judgment is rather in finding differences. It may perhaps appear, on this supposition, that

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there is no material distinction between the wit and the judgment, as they both seem to result from different operations of the same faculty of *comparing*. But in reality, whether they are or are not dependant on the same power of the mind, they differ so very materially in many respects, that a perfect union of wit and judgment is one of the rarest things in the world. When two distinct objects are unlike to each other, it is only what we expect; things are in their common way; and therefore they make no impression on the imagination: but when two distinct objects have a resemblance, we are struck, we attend to them, and we are pleased. The mind of man has naturally a far greater alacrity and satisfaction in tracing resemblances than in searching for differences: because by making resemblances we produce *new images*; we unite, we create, we enlarge our stock; but in making distinctions we offer no food at all to the imagination; the task itself is more severe and irksome, and what pleasure we derive from it is something of a negative and indirect nature. A piece of news is told me in the morning; this, merely as a piece of news, as a fact added to my stock, gives me some pleasure. In the evening I find there was nothing in it. What do I gain by this, but the dissatisfaction to find that I have been imposed upon? Hence it is that men are much more naturally inclined to belief than to incredulity. And it is upon this principle, that the most ignorant and barbarous nations have frequently excelled in similitudes, comparisons, metaphors, and allegories, who have been weak and backward in distinguishing and sorting their ideas. And it is for a reason of this kind, that Homer and the oriental writers, though very fond of similitudes, and though they often strike out such as are truly admirable, seldom take care to have them exact; that is, they are taken with the general resemblance, they paint it strongly, and they take no notice of the difference which may be found between the things compared.

Now, as the pleasure of resemblance is that which principally flatters the imagination, all men are nearly equal in this point, as far as their knowledge of the things represented or compared extends. The principle of this knowledge is very much accidental, as it depends upon experience and observa-

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tion, and not on the strength or weakness of any natural faculty; and it is from this difference in knowledge, that what we commonly, though with no great exactness, call a difference in taste proceeds. A man to whom sculpture is new, sees a barber's block, or some ordinary piece of statuary; he is immediately struck and pleased, because he sees something like an human figure; and, entirely taken up with this likeness, he does not at all attend to its defects. No person, I believe, at the first time of seeing a piece of imitation ever did. Some time after, we suppose that this novice lights upon a more artificial work of the same nature; he now begins to look with contempt on what he admired at first; not that he admired it even then for its unlikeness to a man, but for that general though inaccurate resemblance which it bore to the human figure. What he admired at different times in these so different figures, is strictly the same; and though his knowledge is improved, his taste is not altered. Hitherto his mistake was from a want of knowledge in art, and this arose from his inexperience; but he may be still deficient from a want of knowledge in nature. For it is possible that the man in question may stop here, and that the master-piece of a great hand may please him no more than the middling performance of a vulgar artist; and this not for want of better or higher relish, but because all men do not observe with sufficient accuracy on the human figure to enable them to judge properly of an imitation of it. And that the critical taste does not depend upon a superiour principle in men, but upon superiour knowledge, may appear from several instances. The story of the ancient painter and the shoemaker is very well known. The shoemaker set the painter right with regard to some mistakes he had made in the shoe of one of his figures, and which the painter, who had not made such accurate observations on shoes, and was content with a general resemblance, had never observed. But this was no impeachment to the taste of the painter; it only shewed some want of knowledge in the art of making shoes. Let us imagine, that an anatomist had come into the painter's working-room. His piece is in general well done, the figure in question in a good attitude, and the parts well adjusted to



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their various movements; yet the anatomist, critical in his art, may observe the swell of some muscle not quite just in the peculiar action of the figure. Here the anatomist observes what the painter had not observed; and he passes by what the shoemaker had remarked. But a want of the last critical knowledge in anatomy no more reflected on the natural good taste of the painter, or of any common observer of his piece, than the want of an exact knowledge in the formation of a shoe. A fine piece of a decollated head of St. John the Baptist was shewn to a Turkish emperor; he praised many things, but he observed one defect; he observed that the skin did not shrink from the wounded part of the neck. The sultan on this occasion, though his observation was very just, discovered no more natural taste than the painter who executed this piece, or than a thousand European connoisseurs, who probably never would have made the same observation. His Turkish majesty had indeed been well acquainted with that terrible spectacle, which the others could only have represented in their imagination. On the subject of their dislike there is a difference between all these people, arising from the different kinds and degrees of their knowledge; but there is something in common to the painter, the shoemaker, the anatomist, and the Turkish emperor, the pleasure arising from a natural object, so far as each perceives it justly imitated; the satisfaction in seeing an agreeable figure; the sympathy proceeding from a striking and affecting incident. So far as taste is natural, it is nearly common to all.

In poetry, and other pieces of imagination, the same parity may be observed. It is true, that one man is charmed with Don Bellianis, and reads Virgil coldly: whilst another is transported with the Eneid, and leaves Don Bellianis to children. These two men seem to have a taste very different from each other; but in fact they differ very little. In both these pieces, which inspire such opposite sentiments, a tale exciting admiration is told; both are full of action, both are passionate; in both are voyages, battles, triumphs, and continual changes of fortune. The admirer of Don Bellianis perhaps does not understand the refined language of the

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Eneid, who, if it was degraded into the style of the Pilgrim's Progress, might feel it in all its energy, on the same principle which made him an admirer of Don Bellianis.

In his favourite author he is not shocked with the continual breaches of probability, the confusion of times, the offences against manners, the trampling upon geography; for he knows nothing of geography and chronology, and he has never examined the grounds of probability. He perhaps reads of a shipwreck on the coast of Bohemia: wholly taken up with so interesting an event, and only solicitous for the fate of his hero, he is not in the least troubled at this extravagant blunder. For why should he be shocked at a shipwreck on the coast of Bohemia, who does not know but that Bohemia may be an island in the Atlantick ocean? and after all, what reflection is this on the natural good taste of the person here supposed?

So far then as taste belongs to the imagination, its principle is the same in all men; there is no difference in the manner of their being affected, nor in the causes of the affection; but in the *degree* there is a difference, which arises from two causes principally; either from a greater degree of natural sensibility, or from a closer and longer attention to the object. To illustrate this by the procedure of the senses, in which the same difference is found, let us suppose a very smooth marble table to be set before two men; they both perceive it to be smooth, and they are both pleased with it because of this quality. So far they agree. But suppose another, and after that another table, the latter still smoother than the former, to be set before them. It is now very probable that these men, who are so agreed upon what is smooth, and in the pleasure from thence, will disagree when they come to settle which table has the advantage in point of polish. Here is indeed the great difference between tastes, when men come to compare the excess or diminution of things which are judged by degree and not by measure. Nor is it easy, when such a difference arises, to settle the point, if the excess or diminution be not glaring. If we differ in opinion about two quantities, we can have recourse to a common measure, which may decide the question with the

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utmost exactness; and this, I take it, is what gives mathematical knowledge a greater certainty than any other. But in things whose excess is not judged by greater or smaller, as smoothness and roughness, hardness and softness, darkness and light, the shades of colours, all these are very easily distinguished when the difference is any way considerable, but not when it is minute, for want of some common measures, which perhaps may never come to be discovered. In these nice cases, supposing the acuteness of the sense equal, the greater attention and habit in such things will have the advantage. In the question about the tables, the marble-polisher will unquestionably determine the most accurately. But notwithstanding this want of a common measure for settling many disputes relative to the senses, and their representative the imagination, we find that the principles are the same in all, and that there is no disagreement until we come to examine into the pre-eminence or difference of things, which brings us within the province of the judgment.

So long as we are conversant with the sensible qualities of things, hardly any more than the imagination seems concerned; little more also than the imagination seems concerned when the passions are represented, because by the force of natural sympathy they are felt in all men without any recourse to reasoning, and their justness recognised in every breast. Love, grief, fear, anger, joy, all these passions have in their turns affected every mind; and they do not affect it in an arbitrary or casual manner, but upon certain, natural, and uniform principles. But as many of the works of imagination are not confined to the representation of sensible objects, nor to efforts upon the passions, but extend themselves to the manners, the characters, the actions, and designs of men, their relations, their virtues and vices, they come within the province of the judgment, which is improved by attention and by the habit of reasoning. All these make a very considerable part of what are considered as the objects of taste; and Horace sends us to the schools of philosophy and the world for our instruction in them. Whatever certainty is to be acquired in morality and the science of life; just the same degree of certainty have we in what re-

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lates to them in the works of imitation. Indeed it is for the most part in our skill in manners, and in the observances of time and place, and of decency in general, which is only to be learned in those schools, to which Horace recommends us, that what is called taste, by way of distinction, consists; and which is in reality no other than a more refined judgment. On the whole, it appears to me, that what is called taste, in its most general acceptation, is not a simple idea, but is partly made up of a perception of the primary pleasures of sense, of the secondary pleasures of the imagination, and of the conclusions of the reasoning faculty, concerning the various relations of these, and concerning the human passions, manners, and actions. All this is requisite to form taste, and the ground-work of all these is the same in the human mind; for as the senses are the great originals of all our ideas, and consequently of all our pleasures, if they are not uncertain and arbitrary, the whole ground-work of taste is common to all, and therefore there is a sufficient foundation for a conclusive reasoning on these matters.

Whilst we consider taste merely according to its nature and species, we shall find its principles entirely uniform; but the degree in which these principles prevail, in the several individuals of mankind, is altogether as different as the principles themselves are similar. For sensibility and judgment, which are the qualities that compose what we commonly call a *taste*, vary exceedingly in various people. From a defect in the former of these qualities, arises a want of taste; a weakness in the latter, constitutes a wrong or a bad one. There are some men formed with feelings so blunt, with tempers so cold and phlegmatick, that they can hardly be said to be awake during the whole course of their lives. Upon such persons the most striking objects make but a faint and obscure impression. There are others so continually in the agitation of gross and merely sensual pleasures, or so occupied in the low drudgery of avarice, or so heated in the chace of honours and distinction, that their minds, which had been used continually to the storms of these violent and tempestuous passions, can hardly be put in motion by the delicate and refined play of the imagination. These men,

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though from a different cause, become as stupid and insensible as the former; but whenever either of these happen to be struck with any natural elegance or greatness, or with these qualities in any work of art, they are moved upon the same principle.

The cause of a wrong taste is a defect of judgment. And this may arise from a natural weakness of understanding (in whatever the strength of that faculty may consist), or, which is much more commonly the case, it may arise from a want of proper and well-directed exercise, which alone can make it strong and ready. Besides that ignorance, inattention, prejudice, rashness, levity, obstinacy, in short, all those passions, and all those vices, which pervert the judgment in other matters, prejudice it no less in this its more refined and elegant province. These causes produce different opinions upon every thing which is an object of the understanding, without inducing us to suppose that there are no settled principles of reason. And indeed on the whole one may observe, that there is rather less difference upon matters of taste among mankind, than upon most of those which depend upon the naked reason; and that men are far better agreed on the excellence of a description in Virgil, than on the truth or falsehood of a theory of Aristotle.

A rectitude of judgment in the arts, which may be called a good taste, does in a great measure depend upon sensibility; because if the mind has no bent to the pleasures of the imagination, it will never apply itself sufficiently to works of that species to acquire a competent knowledge in them. But, though a degree of sensibility is requisite to form a good judgment, yet a good judgment does not necessarily arise from a quick sensibility of pleasure; it frequently happens that a very poor judge, merely by force of a greater complexional sensibility, is more affected by a very poor piece, than the best judge by the most perfect; for as every thing new, extraordinary, grand, or passionate, is well calculated to affect such a person, and that the faults do not affect him, his pleasure is more pure and unmixed; and as it is merely a pleasure of the imagination, it is much higher than any which is derived from a rectitude of the judgment; the judgment

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is for the greater part employed in throwing stumbling-blocks in the way of the imagination, in dissipating the scenes of its enchantment, and in tying us down to the disagreeable yoke of our reason: for almost the only pleasure that men have in judging better than others, consists in a sort of conscious pride and superiority, which arises from thinking rightly; but then, this is an indirect pleasure, a pleasure which does not immediately result from the object which is under contemplation. In the morning of our days, when the senses are unworn and tender, when the whole man is awake in every part, and the gloss of novelty fresh upon all the objects that surround us, how lively at that time are our sensations, but how false and inaccurate the judgments we form of things? I despair of ever receiving the same degree of pleasure from the most excellent performances of genius, which I felt at that age from pieces which my present judgment regards as trifling and contemptible. Every trivial cause of pleasure is apt to affect the man of too sanguine a complexion: his appetite is too keen to suffer his taste to be delicate; and he is in all respects what Ovid says of himself in love,

> Molle meum levibus cor est violabile telis,
> Et semper causa est, cur ego semper amem.

One of this character can never be a refined judge; never what the comick poet calls *elegans formarum spectator*. The excellence and force of a composition must always be imperfectly estimated from its effect on the minds of any, except we know the temper and character of those minds. The most powerful effects of poetry and musick have been displayed, and perhaps are still displayed, where these arts are but in a very low and imperfect state. The rude hearer is affected by the principles which operate in these arts even in their rudest condition; and he is not skilful enough to perceive the defects. But as arts advance towards their perfection, the science of criticism advances with equal pace, and the pleasure of judges is frequently interrupted by the faults which are discovered in the most finished compositions.

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Before I leave this subject, I cannot help taking notice of an opinion which many persons entertain, as if the taste were a separate faculty of the mind, and distinct from the judgment and imagination; a species of instinct, by which we are struck naturally, and at the first glance, without any previous reasoning, with the excellencies, or the defects of a composition. So far as the imagination and the passions are concerned, I believe it true, that the reason is little consulted; but where disposition, where decorum, where congruity are concerned, in short, wherever the best taste differs from the worst, I am convinced that the understanding operates and nothing else: and its operation is in reality far from being always sudden, or, when it is sudden, it is often far from being right. Men of the best taste by consideration come frequently to change these early and precipitate judgments, which the mind, from its aversion to neutrality and doubt loves to form on the spot. It is known that the taste (whatever it is) is improved exactly as we improve our judgment, by extending our knowledge, by a steady attention to our object, and by frequent exercise. They who have not taken these methods, if their taste decides quickly, it is always uncertainly; and their quickness is owing to their presumption and rashness, and not to any hidden irradiation that in a moment dispels all darkness from their minds. But they who have cultivated that species of knowledge which makes the object of taste, by degrees and habitually attain not only a soundness, but a readiness of judgment, as men do by the same methods on all other occasions. At first they are obliged to spell, but at last they read with ease and with celerity, but this celerity of its operation is no proof, that the taste is a distinct faculty. Nobody, I believe, has attended the course of a discussion, which turned upon matters within the sphere of mere naked reason, but must have observed the extreme readiness with which the whole process of the argument is carried on, the grounds discovered, the objections raised and answered, and the conclusions drawn from premises, with a quickness altogether as great as the taste can be supposed to work with; and yet where nothing but plain reason either is or can be suspected to operate. To

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multiply principles for every different appearance, is useless, and unphilosophical too in a high degree.

This matter might be pursued much farther; but it is not the extent of the subject which must prescribe our bounds, for what subject does not branch out to infinity? it is the nature of our particular scheme, and the single point of view in which we consider it, which ought to put a stop to our researches.



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# A PHILOSOPHICAL INQUIRY

## INTO THE ORIGIN OF OUR IDEAS OF THE SUBLIME AND BEAUTIFUL.

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## PART I.

### SECTION I.—NOVELTY.

The first and the simplest emotion which we discover in the human mind, is Curiosity. By curiosity I mean whatever desire we have for, or whatever pleasure we take in, novelty. We see children perpetually running from place to place to hunt out something new: they catch with great eagerness, and with very little choice, at whatever comes before them; their attention is engaged by every thing, because every thing has, in that stage of life, the charm of novelty to recommend it. But as those things which engage us merely by their novelty, cannot attach us for any length of time, curiosity is the most superficial of all the affections; it changes its object perpetually; it has an appetite which is very sharp, but very easily satisfied; and it has always an appearance of giddiness, restlessness and anxiety. Curiosity, from its nature, is a very active principle; it quickly runs over the greatest part of its objects, and soon exhausts the variety which is commonly to be met with in nature; the same things make frequent returns, and they return with less and less of any agreeable effect. In short, the occurrences of life, by the time we come to know it a little, would be incapable of affecting the mind with any other sensations than those of loathing and weariness, if many things were not adapted to affect the mind by means of other powers besides novelty in them, and of other passions besides curiosity in ourselves. These powers and passions shall be considered in their place. But whatever these powers are, or upon

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what principle soever they affect the mind, it is absolutely necessary that they should not be exerted in those things which a daily and vulgar use have brought into a stale unaffecting familiarity. Some degree of novelty must be one of the materials in every instrument which works upon the mind; and curiosity blends itself more or less with all our passions.

## SECTION II.

### PAIN AND PLEASURE.

It seems then necessary towards moving the passions of people advanced in life to any considerable degree, that the objects designed for that purpose, besides their being in some measure new, should be capable of exciting pain or pleasure from other causes. Pain and pleasure are simple ideas, incapable of definition. People are not liable to be mistaken in their feelings, but they are very frequently wrong in the names they give them, and in their reasonings about them. Many are of opinion, that pain arises necessarily from the removal of some pleasure; as they think pleasure does from the ceasing or diminution of some pain. For my part, I am rather inclined to imagine, that pain and pleasure, in their most simple and natural manner of affecting, are each of a positive nature, and by no means necessarily dependent on each other for their existence. The human mind is often, and I think it is for the most part, in a state neither of pain nor pleasure, which I call a state of indifference. When I am carried from this state into a state of actual pleasure, it does not appear necessary that I should pass through the medium of any sort of pain. If in such a state of indifference, or ease, or tranquillity, or call it what you please, you were to be suddenly entertained with a concert of musick; or suppose some object of a fine shape, and bright lively colours, to be presented before you; or imagine your smell is gratified with the fragrance of a rose; or if without any previous thirst you were to drink of some pleasant kind of wine, or to taste of some sweetmeat without being hungry; in all the several senses, of hearing, smelling, and tasting, you undoubtedly find a pleasure; yet if I inquire into the state of your

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mind previous to these gratifications, you will hardly tell me that they found you in any kind of pain; or, having satisfied these several senses with their several pleasures, will you say that any pain has succeeded, though the pleasure is absolutely over? Suppose, on the other hand, a man in the same state of indifference, to receive a violent blow, or to drink of some bitter potion, or to have his ears wounded with some harsh and grating sound; here is no removal of pleasure; and yet here is felt, in every sense which is affected, a pain very distinguishable. It may be said, perhaps, that the pain in these cases had its rise from the removal of the pleasure which the man enjoyed before, though that pleasure was of so low a degree as to be perceived only by the removal. But this seems to me a subtilty, that is not discoverable in nature. For if, previous to the pain, I do not feel any actual pleasure, I have no reason to judge that any such thing exists; since pleasure is only pleasure as it is felt. The same may be said of pain, and with equal reason. I can never persuade myself that pleasure and pain are mere relations, which can only exist as they are contrasted; but I think I can discern clearly that there are positive pains and pleasures, which do not at all depend upon each other. Nothing is more certain to my own feelings than this. There is nothing which I can distinguish in my mind with more clearness than the three states, of indifference, of pleasure, and of pain. Every one of these I can perceive without any sort of idea of its relation to any thing else. Caius is afflicted with a fit of the cholick; this man is actually in pain; stretch Caius upon the rack, he will feel a much greater pain: but does this pain of the rack arise from the removal of any pleasure? or is the fit of the cholick a pleasure or a pain just as we are pleased to consider it?

## SECTION III.

### THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE REMOVAL OF PAIN AND POSITIVE PLEASURE.

We shall carry this proposition yet a step farther. We shall venture to propose, that pain and pleasure are not only

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not necessarily dependent for their existence on their mutual diminution or removal, but that, in reality, the diminution or ceasing of pleasure does not operate like positive pain; and that the removal or diminution of pain, in its effect, has very little resemblance to positive pleasure.* The former of these propositions will, I believe, be much more readily allowed than the latter; because it is very evident that pleasure when it has run its career, sets us down very nearly where it found us. Pleasure of every kind quickly satisfies; and when it is over, we relapse into indifference, or rather we fall into a soft tranquillity, which is tinged with the agreeable colour of the former sensation. I own it is not at first view so apparent, that the removal of a great pain does not resemble positive pleasure; but let us recollect in what state we have found our minds upon escaping some imminent danger, or on being released from the severity of some cruel pain. We have on such occasions found, if I am not much mistaken, the temper of our minds in a tenour very remote from that which attends the presence of positive pleasure: we have found them in a state of much sobriety, impressed with a sense of awe, in a sort of tranquillity shadowed with horrour. The fashion of the countenance and the gesture of the body on such occasions is so correspondent to this state of mind, that any person, a stranger to the cause of the appearance, would rather judge us under some consternation, than in the enjoyment of any thing like positive pleasure.

Ως δ' οταν ανδρ' ατη πυκινη λαβῃ, ος' ενι πατρη
Φωτα κατακτεινας, αλλον εξικετο δημον,
Ανδρος ες αφνειου, θαμβος δ' εχει εισορωντας. ILIAD. 24.

As when a wretch, who, conscious of his crime,
Pursued for murder from his native clime,
Just gains some frontier, breathless, pale, amaz'd;
All gaze, all wonder!

* Mr. Locke [Essay on human Understanding, l. ii. c. 20. sect. 16.] thinks that the removal or lessening of a pain is considered and operates as a pleasure, and the loss or diminishing of pleasure as a pain It is this opinion which we consider here.

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This striking appearance of the man whom Homer supposes to have just escaped an imminent danger, the sort of mixed passion of terrour and surprise, with which he affects the spectators, paints very strongly the manner in which we find ourselves affected upon occasions any way similar. For when we have suffered from any violent emotion, the mind naturally continues in something like the same condition, after the cause which first produced it has ceased to operate. The tossing of the sea remains after the storm ; and when this remain of horrour has entirely subsided, all the passion, which the accident raised, subsides along with it ; and the mind returns to its usual state of indifference. In short, pleasure, (I mean any thing either in the inward sensation, or in the outward appearance, like pleasure from a positive cause) has never, I imagine, its origin from the removal of pain or danger.

## SECTION IV.

### OF DELIGHT AND PLEASURE AS OPPOSED TO EACH OTHER.

But shall we therefore say, that the removal of pain or its diminution is always simply painful ? or affirm that the cessation or the lessening of pleasure is always attended itself with a pleasure ? By no means. What I advance is no more than this ; first, that there are pleasures and pains of a positive and independent nature ; and secondly, that the feeling which results from the ceasing or diminution of pain does not bear a sufficient resemblance to positive pleasure, to have it considered as of the same nature, or to entitle it to be known by the same name ; and thirdly, that upon the same principle the removal or qualification of pleasure has no resemblance to positive pain. It is certain that the former feeling (the removal or moderation of pain) has something in it far from distressing or disagreeable in its nature. This feeling, in many cases so agreeable, but in all so different from positive pleasure, has no name which I know ; but that hinders not its being a very real one, and very different from all others. It is most certain, that every species of sa-

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tisfaction or pleasure, how different soever in its manner of affecting, is of a positive nature in the mind of him who feels it. The affection is undoubtedly positive; but the cause may be, as in this case it certainly is, a sort of *Privation*. And it is very reasonable that we should distinguish by some term two things so distinct in nature, as a pleasure that is such simply, and without any relation, from that pleasure which cannot exist without a relation, and that too a relation to pain. Very extraordinary it would be, if these affections, so distinguishable in their causes, so different in their effects, should be confounded with each other, because vulgar use has ranged them under the same general title. Whenever I have occasion to speak of this species of relative pleasure, I call it *Delight;* and I shall take the best care I can, to use that word in no other sense. I am satisfied the word is not commonly used in this appropriated signification; but I thought it better to take up a word already known, and to limit its signification, than to introduce a new one, which would not perhaps incorporate so well with the language. I should never have presumed the least alteration in our words, if the nature of the language, framed for the purposes of business rather than those of philosophy, and the nature of my subject, that leads me out of the common track of discourse, did not in a manner necessitate me to it. I shall make use of this liberty with all possible caution. As I make use of the word *Delight* to express the sensation which accompanies the removal of pain or danger; so when I speak of positive pleasure, I shall for the most part call it simply *Pleasure*.

## SECTION V.

### JOY AND GRIEF.

It must be observed, that the cessation of pleasure affects the mind three ways. If it simply ceases, after having continued a proper time, the effect is *indifference;* if it be abruptly broken off, there ensues an uneasy sense called *disappointment;* if the object be so totally lost that there is no

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chance of enjoying it again, a passion arises in the mind, which is called *grief*. Now there is none of these, not even grief, which is the most violent, that I think has any resemblance to positive pain. The person who grieves, suffers his passion to grow upon him; he indulges it, he loves it; but this never happens in the case of actual pain, which no man ever willingly endured for any considerable time. That grief should be willingly endured, though far from a simply pleasing sensation, is not so difficult to be understood. It is the nature of grief to keep its object perpetually in its eye, to present it in its most pleasurable views, to repeat all the circumstances that attend it, even to the last minuteness; to go back to every particular enjoyment, to dwell upon each, and to find a thousand new perfections in all, that were not sufficiently understood before; in grief, the *pleasure* is still uppermost; and the affliction we suffer has no resemblance to absolute pain, which is always odious, and which we endeavour to shake off as soon as possible. The Odyssey of Homer, which abounds with so many natural and affecting images, has none more striking than those which Menelaus raises of the calamitous fate of his friends, and his own manner of feeling it. He owns, indeed, that he often gives himself some intermission from such melancholy reflections; but he observes, too, that, melancholy as they are, they give him pleasure.

Αλλ' εμπης παντας μεν οδυρομενος και αχευων,
Πολλακις εν μεγαροισι καθημενος ημετεροισιν,
Αλλοτε μεν τε γοω φρενα τερπομαι, αλλοτε δ' αυτε
Παυομαι· αιψηρος δε κορος κρυεροιο γοοιο.

Still in short intervals of *pleasing woe*,
Regardful of the friendly dues I owe,
I to the glorious dead, for ever dear,
*Indulge* the tribute of a *grateful* tear.

Hom. Od. iv.

On the other hand, when we recover our health, when we escape an imminent danger, is it with joy that we are affected? The sense on these occasions is far from that smooth

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and voluptuous satisfaction which the assured prospect of pleasure bestows. The delight which arises from the modifications of pain, confesses the stock from whence it sprung, in its solid, strong, and severe nature.

## SECTION VI.

### OF THE PASSIONS WHICH BELONG TO SELF-PRESERVATION.

MOST of the ideas which are capable of making a powerful impression on the mind, whether simply of Pain or Pleasure, or of the modifications of those, may be reduced very nearly to these two heads, *self-preservation* and *society;* to the ends of one or the other of which all our passions are calculated to answer. The passions which concern self-preservation, turn mostly on *pain* or *danger*. The ideas of *pain*, *sickness* and *death*, fill the mind with strong emotions of horrour; but *life* and *health*, though they put us in a capacity of being affected with pleasure, they make no such impression by the simple enjoyment. The passions therefore which are conversant about the preservation of the individual, turn chiefly on *pain* and *danger*, and they are the most powerful of all the passions.

## SECTION VII.

### OF THE SUBLIME.

WHATEVER is fitted in any sort to excite the ideas of pain and danger, that is to say, whatever is in any sort terrible, or is conversant about terrible objects, or operates in a manner analogous to terrour, is a source of the *sublime;* that is, it is productive of the strongest emotion which the mind is capable of feeling. I say the strongest emotion, because I am satisfied the ideas of pain are much more powerful than those which enter on the part of pleasure. Without all doubt, the torments which we may be made to suffer, are much greater in their effect on the body and mind, than any pleasures which the most learned voluptuary could sug-



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gest, or than the liveliest imagination, and the most sound and exquisitely sensible body, could enjoy. Nay, I am in great doubt whether any man could be found, who would earn a life of the most perfect satisfaction, at the price of ending it in the torments, which justice inflicted in a few hours on the late unfortunate regicide in France. But as pain is stronger in its operation than pleasure, so death is in general a much more affecting idea than pain; because there are very few pains, however exquisite, which are not preferred to death: nay, what generally makes pain itself, if I may say so, more painful, is, that it is considered as an emissary of this king of terrours. When danger or pain press too nearly, they are incapable of giving any delight, and are simply terrible; but at certain distances, and with certain modifications, they may be, and they are delightful, as we every day experience. The cause of this I shall endeavour to investigate hereafter.

## SECTION VIII.

### OF THE PASSIONS WHICH BELONG TO SOCIETY.

The other head under which I class our passions, is that of *society*, which may be divided into two sorts. 1. The society of the *sexes*, which answers the purpose of propagation; and next, that more *general society*, which we have with men and with other animals, and which we may in some sort be said to have even with the inanimate world. The passions belonging to the preservation of the individual, turn wholly on pain and danger: those which belong to *generation*, have their origin in gratifications and *pleasures;* the pleasure most directly belonging to this purpose is of a lively character, rapturous and violent, and confessedly the highest pleasure of sense; yet the absence of this so great an enjoyment, scarce amounts to an uneasiness; and, except at particular times, I do not think it affects at all. When men describe in what manner they are affected by pain and danger, they do not dwell on the pleasure of health and the comfort of security, and then lament the *loss* of these satis-

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factions: the whole turns upon the actual pains and horrours which they endure. But if you listen to the complaints of a forsaken lover, you observe that he insists largely on the pleasures which he enjoyed, or hoped to enjoy, and on the perfection of the object of his desires; it is the *loss* which is always uppermost in his mind. The violent effects produced by love, which has sometimes been even wrought up to madness, is no objection to the rule which we seek to establish. When men have suffered their imaginations to be long affected with any idea, it so wholly engrosses them as to shut out by degrees almost every other, and to break down every partition of the mind which would confine it. Any idea is sufficient for the purpose, as is evident from the infinite variety of causes, which give rise to madness: but this at most can only prove, that the passion of love is capable of producing very extraordinary effects, not that its extraordinary emotions have any connection with positive pain.

## SECTION IX.

### THE FINAL CAUSE OF THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE PASSIONS BELONGING TO SELF-PRESERVATION, AND THOSE WHICH REGARD THE SOCIETY OF THE SEXES.

THE final cause of the difference in character between the passions which regard self-preservation, and those which are directed to the multiplication of the species, will illustrate the foregoing remarks yet further; and it is, I imagine, worthy of observation even upon its own account. As the performance of our duties of every kind depends upon life, and the performing them with vigour and efficacy depends upon health, we are very strongly affected with whatever threatens the destruction of either: but as we were not made to acquiesce in life and health, the simple enjoyment of them is not attended with any real pleasure, lest, satisfied with that, we should give ourselves over to indolence and inaction. On the other hand, the generation of mankind is a great purpose, and it is requisite that men should be animated to the pursuit of it by some great incentive. It is

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therefore attended with a very high pleasure; but as it is by no means designed to be our constant business, it is not fit that the absence of this pleasure should be attended with any considerable pain. The difference between men and brutes in this point, seems to be remarkable. Men are at all times pretty equally disposed to the pleasures of love, because they are to be guided by reason in the time and manner of indulging them. Had any great pain arisen from the want of this satisfaction, reason, I am afraid, would find great difficulties in the performance of its office. But brutes, who obey laws, in the execution of which their own reason has but little share, have their stated seasons; at such times it is not improbable that the sensation from the want is very troublesome, because the end must be then answered, or be missed in many, perhaps forever; as the inclination returns only with its season.

## SECTION X.

### OF BEAUTY.

The passion which belongs to generation, merely as such, is lust only. This is evident in brutes, whose passions are more unmixed, and which pursue their purposes more directly than ours. The only distinction they observe with regard to their mates, is that of sex. It is true, that they stick severally to their own species in preference to all others. But this preference, I imagine, does not arise from any sense of beauty which they find in their species, as Mr. Addison supposes, but from a law of some other kind, to which they are subject; and this we may fairly conclude, from their apparent want of choice amongst those objects to which the barriers of their species have confined them. But man, who is a creature adapted to a greater variety and intricacy of relation, connects with the general passion, the idea of some *social* qualities, which direct and heighten the appetite which he has in common with all other animals; and as he is not designed like them to live at large, it is fit that he should

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have something to create a preference, and fix his choice; and this in general should be some sensible quality; as no other can so quickly, so powerfully, or so surely produce its effect. The object therefore of this mixed passion, which we call love, is the *beauty* of the *sex*. Men are carried to the sex in general, as it is the sex, and by the common law of nature; but they are attached to particulars by personal *beauty*. I call beauty a social quality; for where women and men, and not only they, but when other animals give us a sense of joy and pleasure in beholding them (and there are many that do so), they inspire us with sentiments of tenderness and affection towards their persons; we like to have them near us, and we enter willingly into a kind of relation with them, unless we should have strong reasons to the contrary. But to what end, in many cases, this was designed, I am unable to discover; for I see no greater reason for a connection between man and several animals who are attired in so engaging a manner, than between him and some others who entirely want this attraction, or possess it in a far weaker degree. But it is probable, that Providence did not make even this distinction, but with a view to some great end, though we cannot perceive distinctly what it is, as his wisdom is not our wisdom, nor our ways his ways.

## SECTION XI.

### SOCIETY AND SOLITUDE.

The second branch of the social passions is that which administers to *society in general*. With regard to this, I observe, that society, merely as society, without any particular heightenings, gives us no positive pleasure in the enjoyment; but absolute and entire *solitude*, that is, the total and perpetual exclusion from all society, is as great a positive pain as can almost be conceived. Therefore in the balance between the pleasure of general *society*, and the pain of absolute solitude, *pain* is the predominant idea. But the pleasure of any particular social enjoyment outweighs very considerably the uneasiness caused by the want of that particular enjoyment; so

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that the strongest sensations relative to the habitudes of *particular society*, are sensations of pleasure. Good company, lively conversations, and the endearments of friendship, fill the mind with great pleasure; a temporary solitude, on the other hand, is itself agreeable. This may perhaps prove that we are creatures designed for contemplation as well as action; since solitude as well as society has its pleasures; as from the former observation we may discern, that an entire life of solitude contradicts the purposes of our being, since death itself is scarcely an idea of more terrour.

## SECTION XII.

### SYMPATHY, IMITATION, AND AMBITION.

Under this denomination of society, the passions are of a complicated kind, and branch out into a variety of forms agreeable to that variety of ends they are to serve in the great chain of society. The three principal links in this chain are *sympathy*, *imitation*, and *ambition*.

## SECTION XIII.

### SYMPATHY.

It is by the first of these passions that we enter into the concerns of others; that we are moved as they are moved, and are never suffered to be indifferent spectators of almost any thing which men can do or suffer. For sympathy must be considered as a sort of substitution, by which we are put into the place of another man, and affected in many respects as he is affected: so that this passion may either partake of the nature of those which regard self-preservation, and turning upon pain may be a source of the sublime; or it may turn upon ideas of pleasure; and then whatever has been said of the social affections, whether they regard society in general, or only some particular modes of it, may be applicable here. It is by this principle chiefly that poetry, painting, and other affecting arts, transfuse their passions from one

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breast to another, and are often capable of grafting a delight on wretchedness, misery, and death itself. It is a common observation, that objects which in the reality would shock, are in tragical, and such like representations, the source of a very high species of pleasure. This taken as a fact, has been the cause of much reasoning. The satisfaction has been commonly attributed, first, to the comfort we receive in considering that so melancholy a story is no more than a fiction; and next, to the contemplation of our own freedom from the evils which we see represented. I am afraid it is a practice much too common in enquiries of this nature, to attribute the cause of feelings which merely arise from the mechanical structure of our bodies, or from the natural frame and constitution of our minds, to certain conclusions of the reasoning faculty on the objects presented to us; for I should imagine, that the influence of reason in producing our passions is nothing near so extensive as it is commonly believed.

## SECTION XIV.

### THE EFFECTS OF SYMPATHY IN THE DISTRESSES OF OTHERS.

To examine this point concerning the effect of tragedy in a proper manner, we must previously consider how we are affected by the feelings of our fellow-creatures in circumstances of real distress. I am convinced we have a degree of delight, and that no small one, in the real misfortunes and pains of others: for let the affection be what it will in appearance, if it does not make us shun such objects, if on the contrary it induces us to approach them, if it makes us dwell upon them, in this case I conceive we must have a delight or pleasure of some species or other in contemplating objects of this kind. Do we not read the authentic histories of scenes of this nature with as much pleasure as romances or poems, where the incidents are fictitious? The prosperity of no empire, nor the grandeur of no king, can so agreeably affect in the reading, as the ruin of the state of Macedon, and the distress of its unhappy prince. Such a catastrophe touches us in history as much as the destruction of Troy does in fable.

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Our delight, in cases of this kind, is very greatly heightened, if the sufferer be some excellent person who sinks under an unworthy fortune. Scipio and Cato are both virtuous characters; but we are more deeply affected by the violent death of the one, and the ruin of the great cause he adhered to, than with the deserved triumphs and uninterrupted prosperity of the other; for terrour is a passion which always produces delight when it does not press too close; and pity is a passion accompanied with pleasure, because it arises from love and social affection. Whenever we are formed by nature to any active purpose, the passion which animates us to it, is attended with delight, or a pleasure of some kind, let the subject-matter be what it will; and as our Creator has designed we should be united by the bond of sympathy, he has strengthened that bond by a proportionable delight; and there most where our sympathy is most wanted, in the distresses of others. If this passion was simply painful, we would shun with the greatest care all persons and places that could excite such a passion; as some, who are so far gone in indolence as not to endure any strong impression, actually do. But the case is widely different with the greater part of mankind; there is no spectacle we so eagerly pursue, as that of some uncommon and grievous calamity; so that whether the misfortune is before our eyes, or whether they are turned back to it in history, it always touches with delight. This is not an unmixed delight, but blended with no small uneasiness. The delight we have in such things, hinders us from shunning scenes of misery; and the pain we feel, prompts us to relieve ourselves in relieving those who suffer; and all this antecedent to any reasoning, by an instinct that works us to its own purposes without our concurrence.

## SECTION XV.

### OF THE EFFECTS OF TRAGEDY.

It is thus in real calamities. In imitated distresses the only difference is the pleasure resulting from the effects of imitation; for it is never so perfect, but we can perceive it

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is imitation, and on that principle are somewhat pleased with it. And indeed in some cases we derive as much or more pleasure from that source than from the thing itself. But then I imagine we shall be much mistaken if we attribute any considerable part of our satisfaction in tragedy to the consideration that tragedy is a deceit, and its representations no realities. The nearer it approaches the reality, and the further it removes us from all idea of fiction, the more perfect is its power. But be its power of what kind it will, it never approaches to what it represents. Choose a day on which to represent the most sublime and affecting tragedy we have; appoint the most favourite actors; spare no cost upon the scenes and decorations; unite the greatest efforts of poetry, painting, and musick; and when you have collected your audience, just at the moment when their minds are erect with expectation, let it be reported that a state criminal of high rank is on the point of being executed in the adjoining square; in a moment the emptiness of the theatre would demonstrate the comparative weakness of the imitative arts, and proclaim the triumph of the real sympathy. I believe that this notion of our having a simple pain in the reality, yet a delight in the representation, arises from hence, that we do not sufficiently distinguish what we would by no means choose to do, from what we should be eager enough to see if it was once done. We delight in seeing things, which so far from doing, our heartiest wishes would be to see redressed. This noble capital, the pride of England and of Europe, I believe no man is so strangely wicked as to desire to see destroyed by a conflagration or an earthquake, though he should be removed himself to the greatest distance from the danger. But suppose such a fatal accident to have happened, what numbers from all parts would crowd to behold the ruins, and amongst them many who would have been content never to have seen London in its glory! Nor is it, either in real or fictitious distresses, our immunity from them which produces our delight; in my own mind I can discover nothing like it. I apprehend that this mistake is owing to a sort of sophism, by which we are frequently imposed upon; it arises from our not distinguishing between what is indeed



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a necessary condition to our doing or suffering any thing in general, and what is the *cause* of some particular act. If a man kills me with a sword, it is a necessary condition to this that we should have been both of us alive before the fact; and yet it would be absurd to say, that our being both living creatures was the cause of his crime and of my death. So it is certain, that it is absolutely necessary my life should be out of any imminent hazard, before I can take a delight in the sufferings of others, real or imaginary, or indeed in any thing else from any cause whatsoever. But then it is a sophism to argue from thence, that this immunity is the cause of my delight either on these or on any occasions. No one can distinguish such a cause of satisfaction in his own mind, I believe; nay, when we do not suffer any very acute pain, nor are exposed to any imminent danger of our lives, we can feel for others, whilst we suffer ourselves; and often then most when we are softened by affliction; we see with pity even distresses which we would accept in the place of our own.

## SECTION XVI.

### IMITATION.

The second passion belonging to society is imitation, or, if you will, a desire of imitating, and consequently a pleasure in it. This passion arises from much the same cause with sympathy. For as sympathy makes us take a concern in whatever men feel, so this affection prompts us to copy whatever they do; and consequently we have a pleasure in imitating, and in whatever belongs to imitation merely as it is such, without any intervention of the reasoning faculty; but solely from our natural constitution, which Providence has framed in such a manner as to find either pleasure or delight, according to the nature of the object, in whatever regards the purposes of our being. It is by imitation far more than by precept, that we learn every thing; and what we learn thus, we acquire not only more effectually, but more pleasantly. This forms our manners, our opinions, our lives. It is one of the strongest links of society; it is a species of mutual

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compliance, which all men yield to each other, without constraint to themselves, and which is extremely flattering to all. Herein it is that painting and many other agreeable arts have laid one of the principal foundations of their power. And since, by its influence on our manners and our passions, it is of such great consequence, I shall here venture to lay down a rule, which may inform us with a good degree of certainty when we are to attribute the power of the arts to imitation, or to our pleasure in the skill of the imitator merely, and when to sympathy, or some other cause in conjunction with it. When the object represented in poetry or painting is such as we could have no desire of seeing in the reality, then I may be sure that its power in poetry or painting is owing to the power of imitation, and to no cause operating in the thing itself. So it is with most of the pieces which the painters call still-life. In these a cottage, a dunghill, the meanest and most ordinary utensils of the kitchen, are capable of giving us pleasure. But when the object of the painting or poem is such as we should run to see if real, let it affect us with what odd sort of sense it will, we may rely upon it, that the power of the poem or picture is more owing to the nature of the thing itself than to the mere effect of imitation, or to a consideration of the skill of the imitator, however excellent. Aristotle has spoken so much and so solidly upon the force of imitation in his Poeticks, that it makes any further discourse upon this subject the less necessary.

## SECTION XVII.

### AMBITION.

Although imitation is one of the great instruments used by Providence in bringing our nature towards its perfection, yet if men gave themselves up to imitation entirely, and each followed the other, and so on in an eternal circle, it is easy to see that there never could be any improvement amongst them. Men must remain as brutes do, the same at the end that they are at this day, and that they were in

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the beginning of the world. To prevent this, God has planted in man a sense of ambition, and a satisfaction arising from the contemplation of his excelling his fellows in something deemed valuable amongst them. It is this passion that drives men to all the ways we see in use of signalizing themselves, and that tends to make whatever excites in a man the idea of this distinction so very pleasant. It has been so strong as to make very miserable men take comfort, that they were supreme in misery; and certain it is, that where we cannot distinguish ourselves by something excellent, we begin to take a complacency in some singular infirmities, follies, or defects of one kind or other. It is on this principle that flattery is so prevalent; for flattery is no more than what raises in a man's mind an idea of a preference which he has not. Now, whatever, either on good or upon bad grounds, tends to raise a man in his own opinion, produces a sort of swelling and triumph, that is extremely grateful to the human mind; and this swelling is never more perceived, nor operates with more force, than when without danger we are conversant with terrible objects, the mind always claiming to itself some part of the dignity and importance of the things which it contemplates. Hence proceeds what Longinus has observed of that glorying sense of inward greatness, that always fills the reader of such passages in poets and orators as are sublime; it is what every man must have felt in himself upon such occasions.

## SECTION XVIII.

### THE RECAPITULATION.

To draw the whole of what has been said into a few distinct points:—The passions which belong to self-preservation turn on pain and danger; they are simply painful when their causes immediately affect us; they are delightful when we have an idea of pain and danger, without being actually in such circumstances; this delight I have not called pleasure, because it turns on pain, and because it is different enough from any idea of positive pleasure. Whatever ex-

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cites this delight, I call *sublime*. The passions belonging to self-preservation are the strongest of all the passions.

The second head to which the passions are referred with relation to their final cause, is society. There are two sorts of societies. The first is, the society of sex. The passion belonging to this is called love, and it contains a mixture of lust; its object is the beauty of women. The other is the great society with man and all other animals. The passion subservient to this is called likewise love, but it has no mixture of lust, and its object is beauty; which is a name I shall apply to all such qualities in things as induce in us a sense of affection and tenderness, or some other passion the most nearly resembling these. The passion of love has its rise in positive pleasure; it is, like all things which grow out of pleasure, capable of being mixed with a mode of uneasiness, that is, when an idea of its object is excited in the mind with an idea at the same time of having irretrievably lost it. This mixed sense of pleasure I have not called *pain*, because it turns upon actual pleasure, and because it is, both in its cause and in most of its effects, of a nature altogether different.

Next to the general passion we have for society, to a choice in which we are directed by the pleasure we have in the object, the particular passion under this head called sympathy has the greatest extent. The nature of this passion is, to put us in the place of another in whatever circumstance he is in, and to affect us in a like manner; so that this passion may, as the occasion requires, turn either on pain or pleasure; but with the modifications mentioned in some cases in sect. 11. As to imitation and preference, nothing more need be said.

## SECTION XIX.

### THE CONCLUSION.

I BELIEVED that an attempt to range and methodize some of our most leading passions, would be a good preparative to such an inquiry as we are going to make in the ensuing discourse. The passions I have mentioned are almost the

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only ones which it can be necessary to consider in our present design; though the variety of the passions is great, and worthy in every branch of that variety of an attentive investigation. The more accurately we search into the human mind, the stronger traces we every where find of his wisdom who made it. If a discourse on the use of the parts of the body may be considered as an hymn to the Creator; the use of the passions, which are the organs of the mind, cannot be barren of praise to him, nor unproductive to ourselves of that noble and uncommon union of science and admiration, which a contemplation of the works of infinite wisdom alone can afford to a rational mind; whilst, referring to him whatever we find of right or good or fair in ourselves, discovering his strength and wisdom even in our own weakness and imperfection, honouring them where we discover them clearly, and adoring their profundity where we are lost in our search, we may be inquisitive without impertinence, and elevated without pride; we may be admitted, if I may dare to say so, into the counsels of the Almighty by a consideration of his works. The elevation of the mind ought to be the principal end of all our studies, which if they do not in some measure effect, they are of very little service to us. But, besides this great purpose, a consideration of the rationale of our passions seems to me very necessary for all who would affect them upon solid and sure principles. It is not enough to know them in general: to affect them after a delicate manner, or to judge properly of any work designed to affect them, we should know the exact boundaries of their several jurisdictions; we should pursue them through all their variety of operations, and pierce into the inmost, and what might appear inaccessible parts of our nature,

Quod latet arcana non enarrabile fibra.

Without all this it is possible for a man, after a confused manner, sometimes to satisfy his own mind of the truth of his work; but he can never have a certain determinate rule to go by, nor can he ever make his propositions sufficiently

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clear to others. Poets, and orators, and painters, and those who cultivate other branches of the liberal arts, have without this critical knowledge succeeded well in their several provinces, and will succeed; as among artificers there are many machines made and even invented without any exact knowledge of the principles they are governed by. It is, I own, not uncommon to be wrong in theory and right in practice; and we are happy that it is so. Men often act right from their feelings, who afterwards reason but ill on them from principle; but as it is impossible to avoid an attempt at such reasoning, and equally impossible to prevent its having some influence on our practice, surely it is worth taking some pains to have it just, and founded on the basis of sure experience. We might expect that the artists themselves would have been our surest guides; but the artists have been too much occupied in the practice: the philosophers have done little; and what they have done, was mostly with a view to their own schemes and systems: and as for those called criticks, they have generally sought the rule of the arts in the wrong place; they sought it among poems, pictures, engravings, statues, and buildings. But art can never give the rules that make an art. This is, I believe, the reason why artists in general, and poets principally, have been confined in so narrow a circle; they have been rather imitators of one another than of nature; and this with so faithful an uniformity, and to so remote an antiquity, that it is hard to say who gave the first model. Criticks follow them, and therefore can do little as guides. I can judge but poorly of any thing, whilst I measure it by no other standard than itself. The true standard of the arts is in every man's power; and an easy observation of the most common, sometimes of the meanest things in nature, will give the truest lights, where the greatest sagacity and industry that slights such observation, must leave us in the dark, or, what is worse, amuse and mislead us by false lights. In an inquiry it is almost every thing to be once in a right road. I am satisfied I have done but little by these observations considered in themselves; and I never should have taken the pains to digest them, much less should I have ever ventured to publish

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them, if I was not convinced that nothing tends more to the corruption of science than to suffer it to stagnate. These waters must be troubled before they can exert their virtues. A man who works beyond the surface of things, though he may be wrong himself, yet he clears the way for others, and may chance to make even his errours subservient to the cause of truth. In the following parts I shall inquire what things they are that cause in us the affections of the sublime and beautiful, as in this I have considered the affections themselves. I only desire one favour, that no part of this discourse may be judged of by itself, and independently of the rest; for I am sensible I have not disposed my materials to abide the test of a captious controversy, but of a sober and even forgiving examination; that they are not armed at all points for battle, but dressed to visit those who are willing to give a peaceful entrance to truth.

THE END OF THE FIRST PART.

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# A PHILOSOPHICAL INQUIRY

## INTO THE ORIGIN OF OUR IDEAS OF THE SUBLIME AND BEAUTIFUL.

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## PART II.

### SECTION I.

#### OF THE PASSION CAUSED BY THE SUBLIME.

THE passion caused by the great and sublime in *nature*, when those causes operate most powerfully, is astonishment; and astonishment is that state of the soul, in which all its motions are suspended, with some degree of hor-

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rour.* In this case the mind is so entirely filled with its object, that it cannot entertain any other, nor by consequence reason on that object which employs it. Hence arises the great power of the sublime, that, far from being produced by them, it anticipates our reasonings, and hurries us on by an irresistible force. Astonishment, as I have said, is the effect of the sublime in its highest degree; the inferiour effects are admiration, reverence, and respect.

## SECTION II.

### TERROUR.

No passion so effectually robs the mind of all its powers of acting and reasoning as fear.† For fear being an apprehension of pain or death, it operates in a manner that resembles actual pain. Whatever therefore is terrible, with regard to sight, is sublime too, whether this cause of terrour be endued with greatness of dimensions or not; for it is impossible to look on any thing as trifling, or contemptible, that may be dangerous. There are many animals, who though far from being large, are yet capable of raising ideas of the sublime, because they are considered as objects of terrour; as serpents and poisonous animals of almost all kinds. And to things of great dimensions, if we annex an adventitious idea of terrour, they become without comparison greater. A level plain of a vast extent on land, is certainly no mean idea; the prospect of such a plain may be as extensive as a prospect of the ocean: but can it ever fill the mind with any thing so great as the ocean itself? This is owing to several causes; but it is owing to none more than this, that the ocean is an object of no small terrour. Indeed terrour is in all cases whatsoever, either more openly or latently, the ruling principle of the sublime. Several languages bear a strong testimony to the affinity of these ideas. They frequently use the same word, to signify indifferently

* Part I. sect. 3, 4. 7. † Part IV. sect. 3, 4, 5, 6.



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the modes of astonishment or admiration and those of terrour. Θαμβος is in Greek, either fear or wonder; δεινος is terrible or respectable; αιδω, to reverence or to fear. *Vereor* in Latin, is what αιδω is in Greek. The Romans used the verb *stupeo*, a term which strongly marks the state of an astonished mind, to express the effect either of simple fear, or of astonishment; the word *attonitus* (thunder-struck) is equally expressive of the alliance of these ideas; and do not the French *etonnement*, and the English *astonishment* and *amazement*, point out as clearly the kindred emotions which attend fear and wonder? They who have a more general knowledge of languages, could produce, I make no doubt, many other and equally striking examples.

## SECTION III.

### OBSCURITY.

To make any thing very terrible, obscurity* seems in general to be necessary. When we know the full extent of any danger, when we can accustom our eyes to it, a great deal of the apprehension vanishes. Every one will be sensible of this, who considers how greatly night adds to our dread, in all cases of danger, and how much the notions of ghosts and goblins, of which none can form clear ideas, affect minds which give credit to the popular tales concerning such sorts of beings. Those despotick governments, which are founded on the passions of men, and principally upon the passion of fear, keep their chief as much as may be from the publick eye. The policy has been the same in many cases of religion. Almost all the heathen temples were dark. Even in the barbarous temples of the Americans at this day, they keep their idol in a dark part of the hut, which is consecrated to his worship. For this purpose too the druids performed all their ceremonies in the bosom of the darkest woods, and in the shade of the oldest and most spreading oaks. No

* Part IV. sect. 14. 15. 16.

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person seems better to have understood the secret of heightening, or of setting terrible things, if I may use the expression, in their strongest light, by the force of a judicious obscurity, than Milton. His description of death in the second book is admirably studied; it is astonishing with what a gloomy pomp, with what a significant and expressive uncertainty of strokes and colouring, he has finished the portrait of the king of terrours:

> ——————The other shape,
> If shape it might be call'd that shape had none
> Distinguishable, in member, joint, or limb;
> Or substance might be call'd that shadow seem'd;
> For each seem'd either; black he stood as night;
> Fierce as ten furies; terrible as hell;
> And shook a deadly dart. What seem'd his head
> The likeness of a kingly crown had on.

In this description all is dark, uncertain, confused, terrible, and sublime to the last degree.

## SECTION IV.

### OF THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CLEARNESS AND OBSCURITY WITH REGARD TO THE PASSIONS.

It is one thing to make an idea clear, and another to make it affecting to the imagination. If I make a drawing of a palace, or a temple, or a landscape, I present a very clear idea of those objects; but then (allowing for the effect of imitation, which is something) my picture can at most affect only as the palace, temple, or landscape, would have affected in the reality. On the other hand, the most lively and spirited verbal description I can give, raises a very obscure and imperfect *idea* of such objects; but then it is in my power to raise a stronger *emotion* by the description than I could do by the best painting. This experience constantly evinces. The proper manner of conveying the *affections* of the mind from one to another, is by words; there is a great insufficiency in all other methods of communication;

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and so far is a clearness of imagery from being absolutely necessary to an influence upon the passions, that they may be considerably operated upon, without presenting any image at all, by certain sounds adapted to that purpose; of which we have a sufficient proof in the acknowledged and powerful effects of instrumental musick. In reality, a great clearness helps but little towards affecting the passions, as it is in some sort an enemy to all enthusiasms whatsoever.

## SECTION [IV.]

### THE SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED.

THERE are two verses in Horace's Art of Poetry that seem to contradict this opinion, for which reason I shall take a little more pains in clearing it up. The verses are,

> Segnius irritant animos demissa per aures,
> Quam quæ sunt oculis subjecta fidelibus.

On this the Abbé du Bos founds a criticism, wherein he gives painting the preference to poetry in the article of moving the passions; principally on account of the greater *clearness* of the ideas it represents. I believe this excellent judge was led into this mistake (if it be a mistake) by his system, to which he found it more conformable than I imagine it will be found by experience. I know several who admire and love painting, and yet who regard the objects of their admiration in that art with coolness enough in comparison of that warmth with which they are animated by affecting pieces of poetry or rhetorick. Among the common sort of people, I never could perceive that painting had much influence on their passions. It is true, that the best sorts of painting, as well as the best sorts of poetry, are not much understood in that sphere. But it is most certain, that their passions are very strongly roused by a fanatick preacher, or by the ballads of Chevy-chace, or the Children in the Wood, and by other little popular poems and tales that are current in that rank of life. I do not know of any paintings, bad or good, that produce the same

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effect. So that poetry, with all its obscurity, has a more general, as well as a more powerful dominion over the passions, than the other art. And I think there are reasons in nature, why the obscure idea, when properly conveyed, should be more affecting than the clear. It is our ignorance of things that causes all our admiration, and chiefly excites our passions. Knowledge and acquaintance make the most striking causes affect but little. It is thus with the vulgar; and all men are as the vulgar in what they do not understand. The ideas of eternity, and infinity, are among the most affecting we have: and yet perhaps there is nothing of which we really understand so little, as of infinity and eternity. We do not any where meet a more sublime description than this justly celebrated one of Milton, wherein he gives the portrait of Satan with a dignity so suitable to the subject:

> ——————————He above the rest
> In shape and gesture proudly eminent
> Stood like a tower; his form had yet not lost
> All her original brightness, nor appear'd
> Less than archangel ruin'd, and th' excess
> Of glory obscur'd: as when the sun new ris'n
> Looks through the horizontal misty air
> Shorn of his beams; or from behind the moon
> In dim eclipse disastrous twilight sheds
> On half the nations; and with fear of change
> Perplexes monarchs.——————

Here is a very noble picture; and in what does this poetical picture consist? in images of a tower, an archangel, the sun rising through mists, or in an eclipse, the ruin of monarchs, and the revolutions of kingdoms. The mind is hurried out of itself, by a crowd of great and confused images; which affect because they are crowded and confused. For separate them, and you lose much of the greatness; and join them, and you infallibly lose the clearness. The images raised by poetry are always of this obscure kind; though in general the effects of poetry are by no means to be attributed to the images it raises; which point we shall examine

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more at large hereafter.* But painting, when we have allowed for the pleasure of imitation, can only affect simply by the images it presents; and even in painting, a judicious obscurity in some things contributes to the effect of the picture; because the images in painting are exactly similar to those in nature; and in nature, dark, confused, uncertain images have a greater power on the fancy to form the grander passions, than those have which are more clear and determinate. But where and when this observation may be applied to practice, and how far it shall be extended, will be better deduced from the nature of the subject, and from the occasion, than from any rules that can be given.

I am sensible that this idea has met with opposition, and is likely still to be rejected by several. But let it be considered, that hardly any thing can strike the mind with its greatness, which does not make some sort of approach towards infinity; which nothing can do whilst we are able to perceive its bounds; but to see an object distinctly, and to perceive its bounds, is one and the same thing. A clear idea is therefore another name for a little idea. There is a passage in the book of Job amazingly sublime, and this sublimity is principally due to the terrible uncertainty of the thing described: *In thoughts from the visions of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, fear came upon me and trembling, which made all my bones to shake. Then a spirit passed before my face. The hair of my flesh stood up. It stood still,* but I could not discern the form thereof; *an image was before mine eyes; there was silence; and I heard a voice,—Shall mortal man be more just than God?* We are first prepared with the utmost solemnity for the vision; we are first terrified, before we are let even into the obscure cause of our emotion; but when this grand cause of terrour makes its appearance, what is it? is it not wrapt up in the shades of its own incomprehensible darkness, more awful, more striking, more terrible, than the liveliest description, than the clearest painting, could possibly represent it? When painters have attempted to give us clear repre-

* Part V.

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sentations of these very fanciful and terrible ideas, they have, I think, almost always failed; insomuch that I have been at a loss, in all the pictures I have seen of hell, whether the painter did not intend something ludicrous. Several painters have handled a subject of this kind with a view of assembling as many horrid phantoms as their imaginations could suggest; but all the designs I have chanced to meet of the temptations of St. Anthony, were rather a sort of odd, wild grotesques, than any thing capable of producing a serious passion. In all these subjects poetry is very happy. Its apparitions, its chimeras, its harpies, its allegorical figures, are grand and affecting; and though Virgil's Fame, and Homer's Discord, are obscure, they are magnificent figures. These figures in painting would be clear enough, but I fear they might become ridiculous.

## SECTION V.

### POWER.

Besides those things which *directly* suggest the idea of danger, and those which produce a similar effect from a mechanical cause, I know of nothing sublime, which is not some modification of power. And this branch rises as naturally as the other two branches, from terrour, the common stock of every thing that is sublime. The idea of power, at first view, seems of the class of those indifferent ones, which may equally belong to pain or to pleasure. But in reality, the affection arising from the idea of vast power is extremely remote from that neutral character. For first, we must remember,* that the idea of pain, in its highest degree, is much stronger than the highest degree of pleasure; and that it preserves the same superiority through all the subordinate gradations. From hence it is, that where the chances for equal degrees of suffering or enjoyment are in any sort equal, the idea of the suffering must always be prevalent. And indeed the ideas of pain, and above all of death, are so very affecting, that whilst we remain in the presence of whatever is supposed to have the power of inflicting either,

* Part. I. sect. 7.

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it is impossible to be perfectly free from terrour. Again, we know by experience, that for the enjoyment of pleasure, no great efforts of power are at all necessary; nay, we know, that such efforts would go a great way towards destroying our satisfaction; for pleasure must be stolen, and not forced upon us; pleasure follows the will; and therefore we are generally affected with it by many things of a force greatly inferiour to our own. But pain is always inflicted by a power in some way superiour, because we never submit to pain willingly. So that strength, violence, pain, and terrour, are ideas that rush in upon the mind together. Look at a man, or any other animal of prodigious strength, and what is your idea before reflection? Is it that this strength will be subservient to you, to your ease, to your pleasure, to your interest in any sense? No; the emotion you feel is, lest this enormous strength should be employed to the purposes of rapine* and destruction. That power derives all its sublimity from the terrour with which it is generally accompanied, will appear evidently from its effect in the very few cases in which it may be possible to strip a considerable degree of strength of its ability to hurt. When you do this, you spoil it of every thing sublime, and it immediately becomes contemptible. An ox is a creature of vast strength; but he is an innocent creature, extremely serviceable, and not at all dangerous; for which reason the idea of an ox is by no means grand. A bull is strong too: but his strength is of another kind; often very destructive, seldom (at least amongst us) of any use in our business; the idea of a bull is therefore great, and it has frequently a place in sublime descriptions, and elevating comparisons. Let us look at another strong animal, in the two distinct lights in which we may consider him. The horse in the light of an useful beast, fit for the plough, the road, the draft; in every social useful light, the horse has nothing sublime: but is it thus that we are affected with him, *whose neck is clothed with thunder, the glory of whose nostrils is terrible, who swalloweth the ground with fierceness and rage, neither be-*

* Vide Part III. sect. 21.

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*lieveth that it is the sound of the trumpet?* In this description the useful character of the horse entirely disappears, and the terrible and sublime blaze out together. We have continually about us animals of a strength that is considerable, but not pernicious. Amongst these we never look for the sublime; it comes upon us in the gloomy forest, and in the howling wilderness, in the form of the lion, the tyger, the panther, or rhinoceros. Whenever strength is only useful, and employed for our benefit or our pleasure, then it is never sublime; for nothing can act agreeably to us, that does not act in conformity to our will; but to act agreeably to our will, it must be subject to us, and therefore can never be the cause of a grand and commanding conception. The description of the wild ass, in Job, is worked up into no small sublimity, merely by insisting on his freedom, and his setting mankind at defiance; otherwise the description of such an animal could have nothing noble in it. *Who hath loosed* (says he) *the bands of the wild ass? whose house I have made the wilderness, and the barren land his dwellings. He scorneth the multitude of the city, neither regardeth he the voice of the driver. The range of the mountains is his pasture.* The magnificent description of the unicorn and of leviathan in the same book is full of the same heightening circumstances: *Will the unicorn be willing to serve thee? canst thou bind the unicorn with his band in the furrow? wilt thou trust him because his strength is great?—Canst thou draw out leviathan with an hook?—will he make a covenant with thee? wilt thou take him for a servant forever? shall not one be cast down even at the sight of him?* In short, wheresoever we find strength, and in what light soever we look upon power, we shall all along observe the sublime the concomitant of terrour, and contempt the attendant on a strength that is subservient and innoxious. The race of dogs in many of their kinds, have generally a competent degree of strength and swiftness; and they exert these and other valuable qualities which they possess, greatly to our convenience and pleasure. Dogs are indeed the most social, affectionate, and amiable animals of the whole brute creation; but love approaches much nearer to contempt than is



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commonly imagined; and accordingly, though we caress dogs, we borrow from them an appellation of the most despicable kind, when we employ terms of reproach; and this appellation is the common mark of the last vileness and contempt in every language. Wolves have not more strength than several species of dogs; but, on acconnt of their unmanageable fierceness, the idea of a wolf is not despicable; it is not excluded from grand descriptions and similitudes. Thus we are affected by strength, which is *natural* power. The power which arises from institution in kings and commanders, has the same connection with terrour. Sovereigns are frequently addressed with the title of *dread majesty*. And it may be observed, that young persons, little acquainted with the world, and who have not been used to approach men in power, are commonly struck with an awe which takes away the free use of their faculties. *When I prepared my seat in the street*, (says Job) *the young men saw me, and hid themselves.* Indeed, so natural is this timidity with regard to power, and so strongly does it inhere in our constitution, that very few are able to conquer it, but by mixing much in the business of the great world, or by using no small violence to their natural dispositions. I know some people are of opinion, that no awe, no degree of terrour, accompanies the idea of power: and have hazarded to affirm, that we can contemplate the idea of God himself, without any such emotion. I purposely avoided, when I first considered this subject, to introduce the idea of that great and tremendous Being, as an example in an argument so light as this; though it frequently occurred to me, not as an objection to, but as a strong confirmation of, my notions in this matter. I hope, in what I am going to say, I shall avoid presumption, where it is almost impossible for any mortal to speak with strict propriety. I say then, that whilst we consider the Godhead merely as he is an object of the understanding, which forms a complex idea of power, wisdom, justice, goodness, all stretched to a degree far exceeding the bounds of our comprehension, whilst we consider the Divinity in this refined and abstracted light, the imagination and passions are little or nothing affected. But because we are

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bound, by the condition of our nature, to ascend to these pure and intellectual ideas, through the medium of sensible images, and to judge of these divine qualities by their evident acts and exertions, it becomes extremely hard to disentangle our idea of the cause from the effect by which we are led to know it. Thus when we contemplate the Deity, his attributes and their operation coming united on the mind, form a sort of sensible image, and as such are capable of affecting the imagination. Now, though in a just idea of the Deity, perhaps none of his attributes are predominant, yet to our imagination, his power is by far the most striking. Some reflection, some comparing, is necessary to satisfy us of his wisdom, his justice, and his goodness. To be struck with his power, it is only necessary that we should open our eyes. But whilst we contemplate so vast an object, under the arm, as it were, of Almighty power, and invested upon every side with omnipresence, we shrink into the minuteness of our own nature, and are, in a manner, annihilated before him. And though a consideration of his other attributes may relieve in some measure our apprehensions; yet no conviction of the justice with which it is exercised, nor the mercy with which it is tempered, can wholly remove the terrour that naturally arises from a force which nothing can withstand. If we rejoice, we rejoice with trembling: and even whilst we are receiving benefits, we cannot but shudder at a power which can confer benefits of such mighty importance. When the prophet David contemplated the wonders of wisdom and power which are displayed in the œconomy of man, he seems to be struck with a sort of divine horrour, and cries out, *Fearfully and wonderfully am I made!* An heathen poet has a sentiment of a similar nature; Horace looks upon it as the last effort of philosophical fortitude, to behold without terrour and amazement, this immense and glorious fabrick of the universe:

> Hunc solem, et stellas, et decedentia certis
> Tempora momentis, sunt qui formidine nulla
> Imbuti spectant.

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Lucretius is a poet not to be suspected of giving way to superstitious terrours; yet when he supposes the whole mechanism of nature laid open by the master of his philosophy, his transport on this magnificent view, which he has represented in the colours of such bold and lively poetry, is overcast with a shade of secret dread and horrour:

> His tibi me rebus quædam divina voluptas
> Percipit, atque horror, quod sic Natura tua vi
> Tam manifesta patet ex omni parte retecta.

But the scripture alone can supply ideas answerable to the majesty of this subject. In the scripture, wherever God is represented as appearing or speaking, every thing terrible in nature is called up to heighten the awe and solemnity of the divine presence. The psalms, and the prophetical books, are crowded with instances of this kind. *The earth shook* (says the psalmist,) *the heavens also dropped at the presence of the Lord.* And, what is remarkable, the painting preserves the same character, not only when he is supposed descending to take vengeance upon the wicked, but even when he exerts the like plenitude of power, in acts of beneficence to mankind. *Tremble, thou earth! at the presence of the Lord; at the presence of the God of Jacob; which turned the rock into standing water, the flint into a fountain of waters!* It were endless to enumerate all the passages, both in the sacred and profane writers, which establish the general sentiment of mankind, concerning the inseparable union of a sacred and reverential awe, with our ideas of the divinity. Hence the common maxim, *Primus in orbe deos fecit timor.* This maxim may be, as I believe it is, false with regard to the origin of religion. The maker of the maxim saw how inseparable these ideas were, without considering that the notion of some great power must be always precedent to our dread of it. But this dread must necessarily follow the idea of such a power, when it is once excited in the mind. It is on this principle that true religion has, and must have, so large a mixture of salutary fear; and that false religions have generally nothing else but fear to support them. Be-

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fore the Christian religion had, as it were, humanized the idea of the Divinity, and brought it somewhat nearer to us, there was very little said of the love of God. The followers of Plato have something of it, and only something; the other writers of pagan antiquity, whether poets or philosophers, nothing at all. And they who consider with what infinite attention, by what a disregard of every perishable object, through what long habits of piety and contemplation it is, any man is able to attain an entire love and devotion to the Deity, will easily perceive, that it is not the first, the most natural, and the most striking effect which proceeds from that idea. Thus we have traced power through its several gradations unto the highest of all, where our imagination is finally lost; and we find terrour, quite throughout the progress, its inseparable companion, and growing along with it, as far as we can possibly trace them. Now as power is undoubtedly a capital source of the sublime, this will point out evidently from whence its energy is derived, and to what class of ideas we ought to unite it.

## SECTION VI.

### PRIVATION.

All *general* privations are great, because they are all terrible; *Vacuity*, *Darkness*, *Solitude*, and *Silence*. With what a fire of imagination, yet with what severity of judgment, has Virgil amassed all these circumstances, where he knows that all the images of a tremendous dignity ought to be united, at the mouth of hell! where, before he unlocks the secrets of the great deep, he seems to be seized with a religious horrour, and to retire astonished at the boldness of his own design:

> Dii quibus imperium est animarum, umbræque—*silentes!*
> Et Chaos, et Plegethon! loca *nocte silentia* late?
> Sit mihi fas audita loqui! sit numine vestro
> Pandere res alta terra et *caligine* mersas!
> Ibant *obscuri*, *sola* sub *nocte*, per *umbram*,
> Perque domos Ditis *vacuas*, et *inania* regna.

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Ye subterraneous gods! whose awful sway
The gliding ghosts, and *silent* shades obey;
O Chaos, hoar! and Phlegethon profound!
Whose solemn empire stretches wide around!
Give me, ye great tremendous powers, to tell
Of scenes and wonders in the depth of hell:
Give me your mighty secrets to display
From those *black* realms of darkness to the day.

PITT.

*Obscure* they went through dreary *shades* that led
Along the *waste* dominions of the *dead*.

DRYDEN.

## SECTION VII.

### VASTNESS.

GREATNESS* of dimension is a powerful cause of the sublime. This is too evident, and the observation too common, to need any illustration; it is not so common to consider in what ways greatness of dimension, vastness of extent or quantity, has the most striking effect. For certainly, there are ways, and modes, wherein the same quantity of extension shall produce greater effects than it is found to do in others. Extension is either in length, height, or depth. Of these the length strikes least; an hundred yards of even ground will never work such an effect as a tower an hundred yards high, or a rock or mountain of that altitude. I am apt to imagine likewise, that height is less grand than depth; and that we are more struck at looking down from a precipice, than looking up at an object of equal height; but of that I am not very positive. A perpendicular has more force in forming the sublime than an inclined plane; and the effects of a rugged and broken surface seem stronger than where it is smooth and polished. It would carry us out of our way to enter in this place into the cause of these appearances; but certain it is they afford a large and fruitful field of speculation. However, it may not be amiss to add to these remarks upon magnitude, that

* Part IV. sect. 9.

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as the great extreme of dimension is sublime, so the last extreme of littleness is in some measure sublime likewise; when we attend to the infinite divisibility of matter, when we pursue animal life into these excessively small, and yet organised beings, that escape the nicest inquisition of the sense, when we push our discoveries yet downward, and consider those creatures so many degrees yet smaller, and the still diminishing scale of existence, in tracing which the imagination is lost as well as the sense, we become amazed and confounded at the wonders of minuteness; nor can we distinguish in its effect this extreme of littleness from the vast itself. For division must be infinite as well as addition; because the idea of a perfect unity can no more be arrived at, than that of a complete whole, to which nothing may be added.

## SECTION VIII.

### INFINITY.

ANOTHER source of the sublime is *infinity;* if it does not rather belong to the last. Infinity has a tendency to fill the mind with that sort of delightful horrour, which is the most genuine effect, and truest test of the sublime. There are scarce any things which can become the objects of our senses, that are really and in their own nature infinite. But the eye not being able to perceive the bounds of many things, they seem to be infinite, and they produce the same effects as if they were really so. We are deceived in the like manner, if the parts of some large object are so continued to any indefinite number, that the imagination meets no check which may hinder its extending them at pleasure.

Whenever we repeat any idea frequently, the mind, by a sort of mechanism, repeats it long after the first cause has ceased to operate.* After whirling about, when we sit down, the objects about us still seem to whirl. After a long succession of noises, as the fall of waters, or the beating of forge hammers, the hammers beat and the water

* Part IV. sect. 12.

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roars in the imagination long after the first sounds have ceased to affect it; and they die away at last by gradations which are scarcely perceptible. If you hold up a straight pole, with your eye to one end, it will seem extended to a length almost incredible.* Place a number of uniform and equidistant marks on this pole, they will cause the same deception, and seem multiplied without end. The senses, strongly affected in some one manner, cannot quickly change their tenour or adapt themselves to other things; but they continue in their old channel until the strength of the first mover decays. This is the reason of an appearance very frequent in madmen; that they remain whole days and nights, sometimes whole years, in the constant repetition of some remark, some complaint, or song; which having struck powerfully on their disordered imagination in the beginning of their phrenzy, every repetition reinforces it with new strength; and the hurry of their spirits unrestrained by the curb of reason, continues it to the end of their lives.

## SECTION IX.

### SUCCESSION AND UNIFORMITY.

Succession and *uniformity* of parts are what constitute the artificial infinite. 1. *Succession;* which is requisite that the parts may be continued so long and in such a direction, as by their frequent impulses on the sense to impress the imagination with an idea of their progress beyond their actual limits. 2. *Uniformity;* because if the figures of the parts should be changed, the imagination at every change finds a check; you are presented at every alteration with the termination of one idea, and the beginning of another; by which means it becomes impossible to continue that uninterrupted progression, which alone can stamp on bounded objects the character of infinity.† It is in this kind of arti-

* Part IV. sect. 14.

† Mr. Addison, in the Spectators concerning the pleasures of the imagination, thinks it is because in the rotund at one glance you see half the building. This I do not imagine to be the real cause.

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ficial infinity, I believe, we ought to look for the cause why a rotund has such a noble effect. For in a rotund, whether it be a building or a plantation, you can no where fix a boundary; turn which way you will, the same object still seems to continue, and the imagination has no rest. But the parts must be uniform, as well as circularly disposed, to give this figure its full force; because any difference, whether it be in the disposition, or in the figure, or even in the colour of the parts, is highly prejudicial to the idea of infinity, which every change must check and interrupt, at every alteration commencing a new series. On the same principles of succession and uniformity, the grand appearance of the ancient heathen temples, which were generally oblong forms, with a range of uniform pillars on every side, will be easily accounted for. From the same cause also may be derived the grand effect of the aisles in many of our own old cathedrals. The form of a cross used in some churches seems to me not so eligible as the parallelogram of the antients; at least, I imagine it is not so proper for the outside. For, supposing the arms of the cross every way equal, if you stand in a direction parallel to any of the side walls, or colonnades, instead of a deception that makes the building more extended than it is, you are cut off from a considerable part (two thirds) of its *actual* length; and to prevent all possibility of progression, the arms of the cross taking a new direction, make a right angle with the beam, and thereby wholly turn the imagination from the repetition of the former idea. Or suppose the spectator placed where he may take a direct view of such a building, what will be the consequence? the necessary consequence will be, that a good part of the basis of each angle formed by the intersection of the arms of the cross, must be inevitably lost; the whole must of course assume a broken unconnected figure; the lights must be unequal, here strong, and there weak; without that noble gradation, which the perspective always effects on parts disposed uninterruptedly in a right line. Some or all of these objections will lie against every figure of a cross, in whatever view you take it. I exemplified them in the Greek cross, in which these faults appear the most strongly; but they appear in



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some degree in all sorts of crosses. Indeed there is nothing more prejudicial to the grandeur of buildings, than to abound in angles; a fault obvious in many; and owing to an inordinate thirst for variety, which, whenever it prevails, is sure to leave very little true taste.

## SECTION X.

### MAGNITUDE IN BUILDING.

To the sublime in building, greatness of dimension seems requisite; for on a few parts, and those small, the imagination cannot rise to any idea of infinity. No greatness in the manner can effectually compensate for the want of proper dimensions. There is no danger of drawing men into extravagant designs by this rule; it carries its own caution along with it. Because too great a length in buildings destroys the purpose of greatness, which it was intended to promote; the perspective will lessen it in height as it gains in length; and will bring it at last to a point; turning the whole figure into a sort of triangle, the poorest in its effect of almost any figure that can be presented to the eye. I have ever observed, that colonnades and avenues of trees of a moderate length, were without comparison far grander, than when they were suffered to run to immense distances. A true artist should put a generous deceit on the spectators, and effect the noblest designs by easy methods. Designs that are vast only by their dimensions, are always the sign of a common and low imagination. No work of art can be great, but as it deceives; to be otherwise is the prerogative of nature only. A good eye wil fix the medium betwixt an excessive length or height (for the same objection lies against both), and a short or broken quantity: and perhaps it might be ascertained to a tolerable degree of exactness, if it was my purpose to descend far into the particulars of any art.

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## SECTION XI.

### INFINITY IN PLEASING OBJECTS.

INFINITY, though of another kind, causes much of our pleasure in agreeable, as well as of our delight in sublime images. The spring is the pleasantest of the seasons; and the young of most animals, though far from being completely fashioned, afford a more agreeable sensation than the full grown; because the imagination is entertained with the promise of something more, and does not acquiesce in the present object of the sense. In unfinished sketches of drawing, I have often seen something which pleased me beyond the best finishing; and this I believe proceeds from the cause I have just now assigned.

## SECTION XII.

### DIFFICULTY.

ANOTHER* source of greatness is *difficulty*. When any work seems to have required immense force and labour to effect it, the idea is grand. Stonehenge, neither for disposition nor ornament, has any thing admirable; but those huge rude masses of stone, set on end, and piled each on other, turn the mind on the immense force necessary for such a work. Nay, the rudeness of the work increases this cause of grandeur, as it excludes the idea of art and contrivance; for dexterity produces another sort of effect, which is different enough from this.

## SECTION XIII.

### MAGNIFICENCE.

MAGNIFICENCE is likewise a source of the sublime. A great profusion of things, which are splendid or valuable in themselves, is *magnificent*. The starry heaven, though it

* Part IV. sect. 4, 5. 6.

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occurs so very frequently to our view, never fails to excite an idea of grandeur. This cannot be owing to the stars themselves, separately considered. The number is certainly the cause. The apparent disorder augments the grandeur, for the appearance of care is highly contrary to our ideas of magnificence. Besides, the stars lie in such apparent confusion, as makes it impossible on ordinary occasions to reckon them. This gives them the advantage of a sort of infinity. In works of art, this kind of grandeur, which consists in multitude, is to be very cautiously admitted; because a profusion of excellent things is not to be attained, or with too much difficulty; and because in many cases this splendid confusion would destroy all use, which should be attended to in most of the works of art with the greatest care; besides it is to be considered, that unless you can produce an appearance of infinity by your disorder, you will have disorder only without magnificence. There are, however, a sort of fire-works, and some other things, that in this way succeed well, and are truly grand. There are also many descriptions in the poets and orators, which owe their sublimity to a richness and profusion of images, in which the mind is so dazzled as to make it impossible to attend to that exact coherence and agreement of the allusions, which we should require on every other occasion. I do not now remember a more striking example of this, than the description which is given of the king's army in the play of Henry the Fourth;

> ——————All furnish'd, all in arms,
> All plum'd like ostriches that with the wind
> Baited like eagles having lately bathed:
> As full of spirit as the month of May,
> And gorgeous as the sun in midsummer,
> Wanton as youthful goats, wild as young bulls.
> I saw young Harry with his beaver on
> Rise from the ground like feather'd Mercury;
> And vaulted with such ease into his seat,
> As if an angel dropped from the clouds
> To turn and wind a fiery Pegasus.

In that excellent book, so remarkable for the vivacity of

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its descriptions, as well as the solidity and penetration of its sentences, the Wisdom of the son of Sirach, there is a noble panegyrick on the high priest Simon the son of Onias; and it is a very fine example of the point before us:

*How was he honoured in the midst of the people, in his coming out of the sanctuary! He was as the morning star in the midst of a cloud, and as the moon at the full; as the sun shining upon the temple of the Most High, and as the rainbow giving light in the bright clouds: and as the flower of roses in the spring of the year, as lilies by the rivers of waters, and as the frankincense tree in summer; as fire and incense in the censer, and as a vessel of gold set with precious stones; as a fair olive tree budding forth fruit, and as a cypress which groweth up to the clouds. When he put on the robe of honour, and was clothed with the perfection of glory, when he went up to the holy altar, he made the garment of holiness honourable. He himself stood by the hearth of the altar, compassed with his brethren round about; as a young cedar in Libanus, and as palm trees compassed they him about. So were all the sons of Aaron in their glory, and the oblations of the Lord in their hands, &c.*

## SECTION XIV.

### LIGHT.

HAVING considered extension, so far as it is capable of raising ideas of greatness; *colour* comes next under consideration. All colours depend on *light*. Light therefore ought previously to be examined; and with it its opposite, darkness. With regard to light, to make it a cause capable of producing the sublime, it must be attended with some circumstances, besides its bare faculty of shewing other objects. Mere light is too common a thing to make a strong impression on the mind, and without a strong impression nothing can be sublime. But such a light as that of the sun, immediately exerted on the eye, as it over-

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powers the sense, is a very great idea. Light of an inferiour strength to this, if it moves with great celerity, has the same power; for lightning is certainly productive of grandeur, which it owes chiefly to the extreme velocity of its motion. A quick transition from light to darkness, or from darkness to light, has yet a greater effect. But darkness is more productive of sublime ideas than light. Our great poet was convinced of this; and indeed so full was he of this idea, so entirely possessed with the power of a well managed darkness, that in describing the appearance of the Deity, amidst that profusion of magnificent images, which the grandeur of his subject provokes him to pour out upon every side, he is far from forgetting the obscurity which surrounds the most incomprehensible of all beings, but

> ———With the majesty of *darkness* round
> Circles his throne.———

And what is no less remarkable, our author had the secret of preserving this idea, even when he seemed to depart the farthest from it, when he describes the light and glory which flows from the divine presence; a light which by its very excess is converted into a species of darkness.

> *Dark* with excessive light thy skirts appear.

Here is an idea not only poetical in an high degree, but strictly and philosophically just. Extreme light, by overcoming the organs of sight, obliterates all objects, so as in its effect exactly to resemble darkness. After looking for some time at the sun, two black spots, the impression which it leaves, seem to dance before our eyes. Thus are two ideas as opposite as can be imagined reconciled in the extremes of both; and both in spite of their opposite nature, brought to concur in producing the sublime. And this is not the only instance wherein the opposite extremes operate equally in favour of the sublime, which in all things abhors mediocrity.

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## SECTION XV.

### LIGHT IN BUILDING.

As the management of light is a matter of importance in architecture, it is worth inquiring, how far this remark is applicable to building. I think then, that all edifices calculated to produce an idea of the sublime, ought rather to be dark and gloomy, and this for two reasons; the first is, that darkness itself on other occasions is known by experience to have a greater effect on the passions than light. The second is, that to make an object very striking, we should make it as different as possible from the objects with which we have been immediately conversant; when therefore you enter a building, you cannot pass into a greater light than you had in the open air; to go into some few degrees less luminous, can make only a trifling change; but to make the transition thoroughly striking, you ought to pass from the greatest light, to as much darkness as is consistent with the uses of architecture. At night the contrary rule will hold, but for the very same reason; and the more highly a room is then illuminated, the grander will the passion be.

## SECTION XVI.

### COLOUR CONSIDERED AS PRODUCTIVE OF THE SUBLIME.

Among colours, such as are soft or cheerful (except perhaps a strong red which is cheerful) are unfit to produce grand images. An immense mountain covered with a shining green turf, is nothing, in this respect, to one dark and gloomy; the cloudy sky is more grand than the blue; and night more sublime and solemn than day. Therefore in historical painting, a gay or gaudy drapery can never have a happy effect: and in buildings, when the highest degree of the sublime is intended, the materials and ornaments ought neither to be white, nor green, nor yellow, nor blue, nor of a pale red, nor violet, nor spotted, but of sad and fuscous

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colours, as black, or brown, or deep purple, and the like. Much of gilding, mosaicks, painting, or statues, contribute but little to the sublime. This rule need not be put in practice, except where an uniform degree of the most striking sublimity is to be produced, and that in every particular; for it ought to be observed, that this melancholy kind of greatness, though it be certainly the highest, ought not to be studied in all sorts of edifices, where yet grandeur must be studied: in such cases the sublimity must be drawn from the other sources; with a strict caution however against any thing light and riant; as nothing so effectually deadens the whole taste of the sublime.

## SECTION XVII.

### SOUND AND LOUDNESS.

THE eye is not the only organ of sensation, by which a sublime passion may be produced. Sounds have a great power in these as in most other passions. I do not mean words, because words do not affect simply by their sounds, but by means altogether different. Excessive loudness alone is sufficient to overpower the soul, to suspend its action, and to fill it with terrour. The noise of vast cataracts, raging storms, thunder, or artillery, awakes a great and awful sensation in the mind, though we can observe no nicety or artifice in those sorts of musick. The shouting of multitudes has a similar effect; and, by the sole strength of the sound, so amazes and confounds the imagination, that, in this staggering and hurry of the mind, the best established tempers can scarcely forbear being borne down, and joining in the common cry, and common resolution of the crowd.

## SECTION XVIII.

### SUDDENNESS.

A SUDDEN beginning, or sudden cessation of sound of any considerable force, has the same power. The attention is

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roused by this; and the faculties driven forward, as it were, on their guard. Whatever either in sights or sounds makes the transition from one extreme to the other easy, causes no terrour, and consequently can be no cause of greatness. In every thing sudden and unexpected, we are apt to start; that is, we have a perception of danger, and our nature rouses us to guard against it. It may be observed that a single sound of some strength, though but of short duration, if repeated after intervals, has a grand effect. Few things are more awful than the striking of a great clock, when the silence of the night prevents the attention from being too much dissipated. The same may be said of a single stroke on a drum, repeated with pauses; and of the successive firing of cannon at a distance. All the effects mentioned in this section have causes very nearly alike.

## SECTION XIX.

### INTERMITTING.

A LOW, tremulous, intermitting sound, though it seems in some respects opposite to that just mentioned, is productive of the sublime. It is worth while to examine this a little. The fact itself must be determined by every man's own experience and reflection. I have already observed,* that night increases our terrour, more perhaps than any thing else; it is our nature, when we do not know what may happen to us, to fear the worst that can happen; and hence it is, that uncertainty is so terrible, that we often seek to be rid of it, at the hazard of a certain mischief. Now, some low, confused, uncertain sounds, leave us in the same fearful anxiety concerning their causes, that no light, or an uncertain light, does, concerning the objects that surround us.

Quale per incertam lunam sub luce maligna
Est iter in sylvis.———

———A faint shadow of uncertain light,
Like as a lamp, whose life doth fade away;

* Section 3.



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Or as the moon clothed with cloudy night
Doth shew to him who walks in fear and great affright.
SPENSER.

But light now appearing, and now leaving us, and so off and on, is even more terrible than total darkness: and a sort of uncertain sounds are, when the necessary dispositions concur, more alarming than a total silence.

## SECTION XX.

### THE CRIES OF ANIMALS.

SUCH sounds as imitate the natural inarticulate voices of men, or any animals in pain or danger, are capable of conveying great ideas; unless it be the well-known voice of some creature, on which we are used to look with contempt. The angry tones of wild beasts are equally capable of causing a great and awful sensation.

Hinc exaudiri gemitus, iræque leonum
Vincla recusantum, et sera sub nocte rudentum;
Setigerique sues, atque in præsepibus ursi
Sævire; et formæ magnorum ululare luporum.

It might seem that these modulations of sound carry some connection with the nature of the things they represent, and are not merely arbitrary; because the natural cries of all animals, even of those animals with whom we have not been acquainted, never fail to make themselves sufficiently understood; this cannot be said of language. The modifications of sound, which may be productive of the sublime, are almost infinite. Those I have mentioned, are only a few instances to shew, on what principles they are all built.

## SECTION XXI.

### SMELL AND TASTE. BITTERS AND STENCHES.

SMELLS and tastes, have some share too in ideas of greatness; but it is a small one, weak in its nature, and confined

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in its operations. I shall only observe, that no smells or tastes can produce a grand sensation, except excessive bitters, and intolerable stenches. It is true, that these affections of the smell and taste, when they are in their full force, and lean directly upon the sensory, are simply painful, and accompanied with no sort of delight; but when they are moderated, as in a description or narrative, they become sources of the sublime, as genuine as any other, and upon the very same principle of a moderated pain. "A cup of bitterness;" "to drain the bitter cup of fortune;" "the bitter apples of Sodom;" these are all ideas suitable to a sublime description. Nor is this passage of Virgil without sublimity, where the stench of the vapour in Albuena conspires so happily with the sacred horrour and gloominess of that prophetick forest:

> At rex solicitus monstris oracula Fauni
> Fatidici genitoris adit, lucosque sub alta
> Consulit Albunea, nemorum quæ maxima sacro
> Fonte sonat; *sævamque exhalat opaca Mephitim.*

In the sixth book, and in a very sublime description, the poisonous exhalation of Acheron is not forgot, nor does it at all disagree with the other images amongst which it is introduced:

> Spelunca *alta* fuit, *vastoque immanis* hiatu
> Scrupea, tuta *lacu nigro*, nemorumque *tenebris*,
> Quam super haud ullæ poterant impune volantes
> Tendere iter pennis, *talis sese halitus atris*
> *Faucibus effundens supera ad convexa ferebat.*

I have added these examples, because some friends, for whose judgment I have great deference, were of opinion, that if the sentiment stood nakedly by itself, it would be subject, at first view, to burlesque and ridicule; but this I imagine would principally arise from considering the bitterness and stench in company with mean and contemptible ideas, with which it must be owned they are often united; such an union degrades the sublime in all other instances as well as in those. But it is one of the tests by which

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the sublimity of an image is to be tried, not whether it becomes mean when associated with mean ideas: but whether, when united with images of an allowed grandeur, the whole composition is supported with dignity. Things which are terrible are always great; but when things possess disagreeable qualities, or such as have indeed some degree of danger, but of a danger easily overcome, they are merely *odious*, as toads and spiders.

## SECTION XXII.

### FEELING. PAIN.

Of *feeling*, little more can be said than that the idea of bodily pain, in all the modes and degrees of labour, pain, anguish, torment, is productive of the sublime; and nothing else in this sense can produce it. I need not give here any fresh instances, as those given in the former sections abundantly illustrate a remark, that in reality wants only an attention to nature, to be made by every body.

Having thus run through the causes of the sublime with reference to all the senses, my first observation (sect. 7.) will be found very nearly true; that the sublime is an idea belonging to self-preservation; that it is therefore one of the most affecting we have; that its strongest emotion is an emotion of distress; and that no pleasure* from a positive cause belongs to it. Numberless examples, besides those mentioned, might be brought in support of these truths, and many perhaps useful consequences drawn from them—

> Sed fugit interea, fugit irrevocabile tempus,
> Singula dum capti circumvectamur amore.

* Vide Part I. sect. 6.

THE END OF THE SECOND PART.

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# A PHILOSOPHICAL INQUIRY

## INTO THE ORIGIN OF OUR IDEAS OF THE SUBLIME AND BEAUTIFUL.

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## PART III.

### SECTION I.—OF BEAUTY.

It is my design to consider beauty as distinguished from the sublime; and, in the course of the inquiry, to examine how far it is consistent with it. But previous to this, we must take a short review of the opinions already entertained of this quality; which I think are hardly to be reduced to any fixed principles; because men are used to talk of beauty in a figurative manner, that is to say, in a manner extremely uncertain, and indeterminate. By beauty I mean that quality, or those qualities in bodies, by which they cause love, or some passion similar to it. I confine this definition to the merely sensible qualities of things, for the sake of preserving the utmost simplicity in a subject which must always distract us, whenever we take in those various causes of sympathy which attach us to any persons or things from secondary considerations, and not from the direct force which they have merely on being viewed. I likewise distinguish love, by which I mean that satisfaction which arises to the mind upon contemplating any thing beautiful, of whatsoever nature it may be, from desire or lust; which is an energy of the mind, that hurries us on to the possession of certain objects, that do not affect us as they are beautiful, but by means altogether different. We shall have a strong desire for a woman of no remarkable beauty; whilst the greatest beauty in men, or in other animals, though it

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causes love, yet it excites nothing at all of desire. Which shews that beauty, and the passion caused by beauty, which I call love, is different from desire, though desire may sometimes operate along with it; but it is to this latter that we must attribute those violent and tempestuous passions, and the consequent emotions of the body which attend what is called love in some of its ordinary acceptations, and not to the effects of beauty merely as it is such.

## SECTION II.

### PROPORTION NOT THE CAUSE OF BEAUTY IN VEGETABLES.

Beauty hath usually been said to consist in certain proportions of parts. On considering the matter, I have great reason to doubt, whether beauty be at all an idea belonging to proportion. Proportion relates almost wholly to convenience, as every idea of order seems to do; and it must therefore be considered as a creature of the understanding, rather than a primary cause acting on the senses and imagination. It is not by the force of long attention and inquiry that we find any object to be beautiful; beauty demands no assistance from our reasoning; even the will is unconcerned; the appearance of beauty as effectually causes some degree of love in us, as the application of ice or fire produces the ideas of heat or cold. To gain something like a satisfactory conclusion in this point, it were well to examine, what proportion is; since several who make use of that word, do not always seem to understand very clearly the force of the term, nor to have very distinct ideas concerning the thing itself. Proportion is the measure of relative quantity. Since all quantity is divisible, it is evident that every distinct part into which any quantity is divided, must bear some relation to the other parts, or to the whole. These relations give an origin to the idea of proportion. They are discovered by mensuration, and they are the objects of mathematical inquiry. But whether any part of any determinate quantity be a fourth, or a fifth, or a sixth, or a moiety of the whole; or whether it be of equal

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length with any other part, or double its length, or but one half, is a matter merely indifferent to the mind; it stands neuter in the question: and it is from this absolute indifference and tranquillity of the mind, that mathematical speculations derive some of their most considerable advantages; because there is nothing to interest the imagination; because the judgment sits free and unbiassed to examine the point. All proportions, every arrangement of quantity is alike to the understanding, because the same truths result to it from all; from greater, from lesser, from equality and inequality. But surely beauty is no idea belonging to mensuration; nor has it any thing to do with calculation and geometry. If it had, we might then point out some certain measures which we could demonstrate to be beautiful, either as simply considered, or as related to others; and we could call in those natural objects, for whose beauty we have no voucher but the sense, to this happy standard, and confirm the voice of our passions by the determination of our reason. But since we have not this help, let us see whether proportion can in any sense be considered as the cause of beauty, as hath been so generally, and by some so confidently affirmed. If proportion be one of the constituents of beauty, it must derive that power either from some natural properties inherent in certain measures, which operate mechanically; from the operation of custom; or from the fitness which some measures have to answer some particular ends of conveniency. Our business therefore is to inquire, whether the parts of those objects, which are found beautiful in the vegetable or animal kingdoms, are constantly so formed according to such certain measures, as may serve to satisfy us that their beauty results from those measures on the principle of a natural mechanical cause; or from custom; or, in fine, from their fitness for any determinate purposes. I intend to examine this point under each of these heads in their order. But before I proceed further, I hope it will not be thought amiss, if I lay down the rules which governed me in this inquiry, and which have misled me in it, if I have gone astray. 1. If two bodies produce the same or a

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similar effect on the mind, and on examination they are found to agree in some of their properties, and to differ in others; the common effect is to be attributed to the properties in which they agree, and not to those in which they differ. 2. Not to account for the effect of a natural object from the effect of an artificial object. 3. Not to account for the effect of any natural object from a conclusion of our reason concerning its uses, if a natural cause may be assigned. 4. Not to admit any determinate quantity, or any relation of quantity, as the cause of a certain effect, if the effect is produced by different or opposite measures and relations; or if these measures and relations may exist, and yet the effect may not be produced. These are the rules which I have chiefly followed, whilst I examined into the power of proportion considered as a natural cause; and these, if he thinks them just, I request the reader to carry with him throughout the following discussion; whilst we inquire in the first place, in what things we find this quality of beauty: next, to see whether in these we can find any assignable proportions, in such a manner as ought to convince us that our idea of beauty results from them. We shall consider this pleasing power, as it appears in vegetables, in the inferiour animals, and in man. Turning our eyes to the vegetable creation, we find nothing there so beautiful as flowers; but flowers are almost of every sort of shape, and of every sort of disposition; they are turned and fashioned into an infinite variety of forms; and from these forms botanists have given them their names, which are almost as various. What proportion do we discover between the stalks and the leaves of flowers, or between the leaves and the pistils? How does the slender stalk of the rose agree with the bulky head under which it bends? but the rose is a beautiful flower; and can we undertake to say that it does not owe a great deal of its beauty even to that disproportion; the rose is a large flower, yet it grows upon a small shrub; the flower of the apple is very small, and grows upon a large tree; yet the rose and the apple blossom are both beautiful, and the plants that bear them

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are most engagingly attired, notwithstanding this disproportion. What by general consent is allowed to be a more beautiful object than an orange tree, flourishing at once with its leaves, its blossoms, and its fruit? but it is in vain that we search here for any proportion between the height, the breadth, or any thing else concerning the dimensions of the whole, or concerning the relation of the particular parts to each other. I grant that we may observe in many flowers, something of a regular figure, and of a methodical disposition of the leaves. The rose has such a figure and such a disposition of its petals; but in an oblique view, when this figure is in a good measure lost, and the order of the leaves confounded, it yet retains its beauty; the rose is even more beautiful before it is full blown; and the bud, before this exact figure is formed; and this is not the only instance wherein method and exactness, the soul of proportion, are found rather prejudicial than serviceable to the cause of beauty.

## SECTION III.

### PROPORTION NOT THE CAUSE OF BEAUTY IN ANIMALS.

THAT proportion has but a small share in the formation of beauty, is full as evident among animals. Here the greatest variety of shapes and dispositions of parts, are well fitted to excite this idea. The swan, confessedly a beautiful bird, has a neck longer than the rest of his body, and but a very short tail: is this a beautiful proportion? we must allow that it is. But then what shall we say to the peacock, who has comparatively but a short neck, with a tail longer than the neck and the rest of the body taken together? How many birds are there that vary infinitely from each of these standards, and from every other which you can fix; with proportions different, and often directly opposite to each other! and yet many of these birds are extremely beautiful; when upon considering them we find nothing in any one part that might determine us *á priori*, to say what the others ought to be, nor indeed to guess any thing about them,



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but what experience might shew to be full of disappointment and mistake. And with regard to the colours either of birds or flowers, for there is something similar in the colouring of both, whether they are considered in their extension or gradation, there is nothing of proportion to be observed. Some are of but one single colour; others have all the colours of the rainbow; some are of the primary colours, others are of the mixt; in short, an attentive observer may soon conclude, that there is as little of proportion in the colouring as in the shapes of these objects. Turn next to beasts; examine the head of a beautiful horse; find what proportion that bears to his body, and to his limbs, and what relations these have to each other; and when you have settled these proportions as a standard of beauty, then take a dog or cat, or any other animal, and examine how far the same proportions between their heads and their necks, between those and the body, and so on, are found to hold; I think we may safely say, that they differ in every species, yet that there are individuals found in a great many species so differing, that have a very striking beauty. Now, if it be allowed that very different, and even contrary, forms and dispositions are consistent with beauty, it amounts I believe to a concession, that no certain measures, operating from a natural principle, are necessary to produce it, at least so far as the brute species is concerned.

## SECTION IV.

### PROPORTION NOT THE CAUSE OF BEAUTY IN THE HUMAN SPECIES.

THERE are some parts of the human body, that are observed to hold certain proportions to each other; but before it can be proved, that the efficient cause of beauty lies in these, it must be shewn, that wherever these are found exact, the person to whom they belong is beautiful: I mean in the effect produced on the view, either of any member dis-

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tinctly considered, or of the whole body together. It must be likewise shewn, that these parts stand in such a relation to each other, that the comparison between them may be easily made, and that the affection of the mind may naturally result from it. For my part, I have at several times very carefully examined many of those proportions, and found them hold very nearly, or altogether alike in many subjects, which were not only very different from one another, but where one has been very beautiful, and the other very remote from beauty. With regard to the parts which are found so proportioned, they are often so remote from each other, in situation, nature, and office, that I cannot see how they admit of any comparison, nor consequently how any effect owing to proportion can result from them. The neck, say they in beautiful bodies, should measure with the calf of the leg; it should likewise be twice the circumference of the wrist. And an infinity of observations of this kind are to be found in the writings and conversations of many. But what relation has the calf of the leg to the neck; or either of these parts to the wrist? These proportions are certainly to be found in handsome bodies. They are as certainly in ugly ones; as any who will take the pains to try may find. Nay, I do not know but they may be least perfect in some of the most beautiful. You may assign any proportions you please to every part of the human body; and I undertake that a painter shall religiously observe them all, and notwithstanding produce, if he pleases, a very ugly figure. The same painter shall considerably deviate from these proportions, and produce a very beautiful one. And indeed it may be observed in the master-pieces of the ancient and modern statuary, that several of them differ very widely from the proportions of others, in parts very conspicuous and of great consideration; and that they differ no less from the proportions we find in living men, of forms extremely striking and agreeable. And after all, how are the partisans of proportional beauty agreed amongst themselves about the proportions of the human body? some hold it to be seven heads; some make it eight; whilst others extend it even to ten; a vast difference in such a small number of divisions! Others

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take other methods of estimating the proportions, and all with equal success. But are these proportions exactly the same in all handsome men? or are they at all the proportions found in beautiful women? nobody will say that they are; yet both sexes are undoubtedly capable of beauty, and the female of the greatest; which advantage I believe will hardly be attributed to the superiour exactness of proportion in the fair sex. Let us rest a moment on this point; and consider how much difference there is between the measures that prevail in many similar parts of the body, in the two sexes of this single species only. If you assign any determinate proportions to the limbs of a man, and if you limit human beauty to these proportions, when you find a woman who differs in the make and measures of almost every part, you must conclude her not to be beautiful, in spite of the suggestions of your imagination; or, in obedience to your imagination, you must renounce your rules; you must lay by the scale and compass, and look out for some other cause of beauty. For if beauty be attached to certain measures which operate from a *principle in nature*, why should similar parts with different measures of proportion be found to have beauty, and this too in the very same species? but to open our view a little, it is worth observing, that almost all animals have parts of very much the same nature, and destined nearly to the same purposes? an head, neck, body, feet, eyes, ears, nose, and mouth; yet Providence, to provide in the best manner for their several wants, and to display the riches of his wisdom and goodness in his creation, has worked out of these few and similar organs, and members, a diversity hardly short of infinite in their disposition, measures, and relation. But, as we have before observed, amidst this infinite diversity, one particular is common to many species: several of the individuals which compose them are capable of affecting us with a sense of loveliness; and whilst they agree in producing this effect, they differ extremely in the relative measures of those parts which have produced it. These considerations were sufficient to induce me to reject the notion of any particular proportions that operated by nature to produce a pleasing effect; but those who will agree

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with me with regard to a particular proportion, are strongly prepossessed in favour of one more indefinite. They imagine, that although beauty in general is annexed to no certain measures common to the several kinds of pleasing plants and animals; yet that there is a certain proportion in each species absolutely essential to the beauty of that particular kind. If we consider the animal world in general, we find beauty confined to no certain measures; but as some peculiar measure and relation of parts is what distinguishes each peculiar class of animals, it must of necessity be, that the beautiful in each kind will be found in the measures and proportions of that kind; for otherwise it would deviate from its proper species, and become in some sort monstrous: however, no species is so strictly confined to any certain proportions, that there is not a considerable variation amongst the individuals; and as it has been shewn of the human, so it may be shewn of the brute kinds, that beauty is found indifferently in all the proportions which each kind can admit, without quitting its common form; and it is this idea of a common form that makes the proportion of parts at all regarded, and not the operation of any natural cause: indeed a little consideration will make it appear, that it is not measure but manner that creates all the beauty which belongs to shape. What light do we borrow from these boasted proportions, when we study ornamental design? It seems amazing to me, that artists, if they were as well convinced as they pretend to be, that proportion is a principal cause of beauty, have not by them at all times accurate measurements of all sorts of beautiful animals to help them to proper proportions, when they would contrive any thing elegant, especially as they frequently assert, that it is from an observation of the beautiful in nature they direct their practice. I know that it has been said long since, and echoed backward and forward from one writer to another a thousand times, that the proportions of building have been taken from those of the human body. To make this forced analogy complete, they represent a man with his arms raised and extended at full length, and then describe a sort of square, as it is

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formed by passing lines along the extremities of this strange figure. But it appears very clearly to me, that the human figure never supplied the architect with any of his ideas. For in the first place, men are very rarely seen in this strained posture ; it is not natural to them ; neither is it at all becoming. Secondly, the view of the human figure so disposed, does not naturally suggest the idea of a square, but rather of a cross ; as that large space between the arms and the ground, must be filled with something before it can make any body think of a square. Thirdly, several buildings are by no means of the form of that particular square, which are notwithstanding planned by the best architects, and produce an effect altogether as good, and perhaps a better. And certainly nothing could be more unaccountably whimsical, than for an architect to model his performance by the human figure since no two things can have less resemblance or analogy, than a man, and an house or temple : do we need to observe, that their purposes are entirely different ? What I am apt to suspect is this : that these analogies were devised to give a credit to the works of art, by shewing a conformity between them and the noblest works in nature ; not that the latter served at all to supply hints for the perfection of the former. And I am the more fully convinced, that the patrons of proportion have transferred their artificial ideas to nature, and not borrowed from thence the proportions they use in works of art ; because in any discussion of this subject they always quit as soon as possible the open field of natural beauties, the animal and vegetable kingdoms, and fortify themselves within the artificial lines and angles of architecture. For there is in mankind an unfortunate propensity to make themselves, their views, and their works, the measure of excellence in every thing whatsoever. Therefore having observed that their dwellings were most commodious and firm when they were thrown into regular figures, with parts answerable to each other ; they transferred these ideas to their gardens ; they turned their trees into pillars, pyramids, and obelisks ; they formed their hedges into so many green walls, and fashioned their walks

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into squares, triangles, and other mathematical figures, with exactness and symmetry; and they thought, if they were not imitating, they were at least improving nature, and teaching her to know her business. But nature has at last escaped from their discipline and their fetters; and our gardens, if nothing else, declare, we begin to feel that mathematical ideas are not the true measures of beauty. And surely they are full as little so in the animal, as in the vegetable world. For is it not extraordinary, that in these fine descriptive pieces, these innumerable odes and elegies which are in the mouths of all the world, and many of which have been the entertainment of ages, that in these pieces which describe love with such a passionate energy, and represent its object in such an infinite variety of lights, not one word is said of proportion, if it be, what some insist it is, the principal component of beauty; whilst at the same time, several other qualities are very frequently and warmly mentioned? But if proportion has not this power, it may appear odd how men came originally to be so prepossessed in its favour. It arose, I imagine, from the fondness I have just mentioned, which men bear so remarkably to their own works and notions; it arose from false reasonings on the effects of the customary figure of animals; it arose from the Platonick theory of fitness and aptitude. For which reason, in the next section, I shall consider the effects of custom in the figure of animals; and afterwards the idea of fitness: since if proportion does not operate by a natural power attending some measures, it must be either by custom, or the idea of utility; there is no other way.

## SECTION V.

### PROPORTION FURTHER CONSIDERED.

If I am not mistaken, a great deal of the prejudice in favour of proportion has arisen, not so much from the observation of any certain measures found in beautiful bodies, as from a wrong idea of the relation which deformity bears to beauty, to which it has been considered as the opposite;

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on this principle it was concluded, that where the causes of deformity were removed, beauty must naturally and necessarily be introduced. This I believe is a mistake. For *deformity* is opposed not to beauty, but to the *complete, common form*. If one of the legs of a man be found shorter than the other, the man is deformed; because there is something wanting to complete the whole idea we form of a man; and this has the same effect in natural faults, as maiming and mutilation produce from accidents. So if the back be humped, the man is deformed; because his back has an unusual figure, and what carries with it the idea of some disease or misfortune; so if a man's neck be considerably longer or shorter than usual, we say he is deformed in that part, because men are not commonly made in that manner. But surely every hour's experience may convince us, that a man may have his legs of an equal length, and resembling each other in all respects, and his neck of a just size, and his back quite straight, without having at the same time the least perceivable beauty. Indeed beauty is so far from belonging to the idea of custom, that in reality what affects us in that manner is extremely rare and uncommon. The beautiful strikes us as much by its novelty as the deformed itself. It is thus in those species of animals with which we are acquainted; and if one of a new species were represented, we should by no means wait until custom had settled an idea of proportion, before we decided concerning its beauty or ugliness: which shews that the general idea of beauty can be no more owing to customary than to natural proportion. Deformity arises from the want of the common proportions; but the necessary result of their existence in any object is not beauty. If we suppose proportion in natural things to be relative to custom and use, the nature of use and custom will shew, that beauty, which is a *positive* and powerful quality, cannot result from it. We are so wonderfully formed, that, whilst we are creatures vehemently desirous of novelty, we are as strongly attached to habit and custom. But it is the nature of things which hold us by custom, to affect us very little whilst we are in possession of them, but strongly when they are absent. I remember to have frequented a certain place, every day for a long time together; and I may truly say, that so far

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from finding pleasure in it, I was affected with a sort of weariness and disgust; I came, I went, I returned, without pleasure; yet if by any means I passed by the usual time of my going thither, I was remarkably uneasy, and was not quiet till I had got into my old track. They who use snuff, take it almost without being sensible that they take it, and the acute sense of smell is deadened, so as to feel hardly any thing from so sharp a stimulus; yet deprive the snuff-taker of his box, and he is the most uneasy mortal in the world. Indeed so far are use and habit from being causes of pleasure, merely as such, that the effect of constant use is to make all things of whatever kind entirely unaffecting. For as use at last takes off the painful effect of many things, it reduces the pleasurable effect in others in the same manner, and brings both to a sort of mediocrity and indifference. Very justly is use called a second nature; and our natural and common state is one of absolute indifference, equally prepared for pain or pleasure. But when we are thrown out of this state, or deprived of any thing requisite to maintain us in it; when this chance does not happen by pleasure from some mechanical cause, we are always hurt. It is so with the second nature, custom, in all things which relate to it. Thus the want of the usual proportions in men and other animals is sure to disgust, though their presence is by no means any cause of real pleasure. It is true, that the proportions laid down as causes of beauty in the human body, are frequently found in beautiful ones, because they are generally found in all mankind; but if it can be shewn too, that they are found without beauty, and that beauty frequently exists without them, and that this beauty, where it exists, always can be assigned to other less equivocal causes, it will naturally lead us to conclude, that proportion and beauty are not ideas of the same nature. The true opposite to beauty is not *disproportion* or deformity, but *ugliness*; and as it proceeds from causes opposite to those of positive beauty, we cannot consider it until we come to treat of that. Between beauty and ugliness there is a sort of mediocrity, in which the assigned proportions



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are most commonly found; but this has no effect upon the passsions.

## SECTION VI.

### FITNESS NOT THE CAUSE OF BEAUTY.

It is said that the idea of utility, or of a part's being well adapted to answer its end, is the cause of beauty, or indeed beauty itself. If it were not for this opinion, it had been impossible for the doctrine of proportion to have held its ground very long; the world would be soon weary of hearing of measures which related to nothing, either of a natural principle, or of a fitness to answer some end; the idea which mankind most commonly conceive of proportion, is the suitableness of means to certain ends, and, where this is not the question, very seldom trouble themselves about the effect of different measures of things. Therefore it was necessary for this theory to insist that not only artificial, but natural objects took their beauty from the fitness of the parts for their several purposes. But in framing this theory, I am apprehensive that experience was not sufficiently consulted. For, on that principle, the wedge-like snout of a swine, with its tough cartilage at the end, the little sunk eyes, and the whole make of the head, so well adapted to its offices of digging and rooting, would be extremely beautiful. The great bag hanging to the bill of a pelican, a thing highly useful to this animal, would be likewise as beautiful in our eyes. The hedgehog, so well secured against all assaults by his prickly hide, and the porcupine with his missile quills, would be then considered as creatures of no small elegance. There are few animals whose parts are better contrived than those of a monkey; he has the hands of a man, joined to the springy limbs of a beast; he is admirably calculated for running, leaping, grappling, and climbing; and yet there are few animals which seem to have less beauty in the eyes of all mankind. I need say little on the trunk of the elephant, of such various usefulness, and which is so far from contributing to his beauty. How well fitted is the wolf for

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running and leaping! how admirably is the lion armed for battle! but will any one therefore call the elephant, the wolf, and the lion, beautiful animals? I believe nobody will think the form of a man's leg so well adapted to running, as those of an horse, a dog, a deer, and several other creatures; at least they have not that appearance: yet, I believe, a well-fashioned human leg will be allowable far to exceed all these in beauty. If the fitness of parts was what constituted the loveliness of their form, the actual employment of them would undoubtedly much augment it; but this, though it is sometimes so upon another principle, is far from being always the case. A bird on the wing is not so beautiful as when it is perched; nay, there are several of the domestick fowls which are seldom seen to fly, and which are nothing the less beautiful on that account; yet birds are so extremely different in their form from the beast and human kinds, that you cannot, on the principle of fitness, allow them any thing agreeable, but in consideration of their parts being designed for quite other purposes. I never in my life chanced to see a peacock fly; and yet before, very long before I considered any aptitude in his form for the aërial life, I was struck with the extreme beauty which raises that bird above many of the best flying fowls in the world; though, for any thing I saw, his way of living was much like that of the swine, which fed in the farm-yard along with him. The same may be said of cocks, hens, and the like; they are of the flying kind in figure; in their manner of moving not very different from men and beasts. To leave these foreign examples; if beauty in our own species was annexed to use, men would be much more lovely than women; and strength and agility would be considered as the only beauties. But to call strength by the name of beauty, to have but one denomination for the qualities of a Venus and Hercules, so totally different in almost all respects, is surely a strange confusion of ideas, or abuse of words. The cause of this confusion, I imagine, proceeds from our frequently perceiving the parts of the human and other animal bodies to be at once very beautiful, and very well adapted to their

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purposes; and we are deceived by a sophism, which makes us take that for a cause which is only a concomitant: this is the sophism of the fly; who imagined he raised a great dust, because he stood upon the chariot that really raised it. The stomach, the lungs, the liver, as well as other parts, are incomparably well adapted to their purposes; yet they are far from having any beauty. Again, many things are very beautiful, in which it is impossible to discern any idea of use. And I appeal to the first and most natural feelings of mankind, whether, on beholding a beautiful eye, or a well-fashioned mouth, or a well-turned leg, any ideas of their being well fitted for seeing, eating, or running, ever present themselves. What idea of use is it that flowers excite, the most beautiful part of the vegetable world? It is true, that the infinitely wise and good Creator has, of his bounty, frequently joined beauty to those things which he has made useful to us: but this does not prove that an idea of use and beauty are the same thing, or that they are any way dependent on each other.

## SECTION VII.

### THE REAL EFFECTS OF FITNESS.

When I excluded proportion and fitness from any share in beauty, I did not by any means intend to say that they were of no value, or that they ought to be disregarded in works of art. Works of art are the proper sphere of their power; and here it is that they have their full effect. Whenever the wisdom of our Creator intended that we should be affected with any thing, he did not confide the execution of his design to the languid and precarious operation of our reason; but he endued it with powers and properties that prevent the understanding, and even the will, which seizing upon the senses and imagination, captivate the soul before the understanding is ready either to join with them, or to oppose them. It is by a long deduction, and much study, that we discover the adorable wisdom of God in his works:

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when we discover it, the effect is very different, not only in the manner of acquiring it, but in its own nature, from that which strikes us without any preparation from the sublime or the beautiful. How different is the satisfaction of an anatomist, who discovers the use of the muscles and of the skin, the excellent contrivance of the one for the various movements of the body, and the wonderful texture of the other, at once a general covering, and at once a general outlet as well as inlet; how different is this from the affection which possesses an ordinary man at the sight of a delicate smooth skin, and all the other parts of beauty, which require no investigation to be perceived! In the former case, whilst we look up to the Maker with admiration and praise, the object which causes it may be odious and distasteful; the latter very often so touches us by its power on the imagination, that we examine but little into the artifice of its contrivance; and we have need of a strong effort of our reason to disentangle our minds from the allurements of the object, to a consideration of that wisdom which invented so powerful a machine. The effect of proportion and fitness, at least so far as they proceed from a mere consideration of the work itself, produces approbation, the acquiescence of the understanding, but not love, nor any passion of that species. When we examine the structure of a watch, when we come to know thoroughly the use of every part of it, satisfied as we are with the fitness of the whole, we are far enough from perceiving any thing like beauty in the watch-work itself; but let us look on the case, the labour of some curious artist in engraving, with little or no idea of use, we shall have a much livelier idea of beauty than we ever could have had from the watch itself, though the master-piece of Graham. In beauty, as I said, the effect is previous to any knowledge of the use; but to judge of proportion, we must know the end for which any work is designed. According to the end, the proportion varies. Thus there is one proportion of a tower, another of an house; one proportion of a gallery, another of an hall, another of a chamber. To judge of the proportions of these, you must be first acquainted with the purposes for which they were designed. Good sense and

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experience acting together, find out what is fit to be done in every work of art. We are rational creatures, and in all our works we ought to regard their end and purpose; the gratification of any passion, how innocent soever, ought only to be of a secondary consideration. Herein is placed the real power of fitness and proportion; they operate on the understanding considering them, which *approves* the work and acquiesces in it. The passions, and the imagination which principally raises them, have here very little to do. When a room appears in its original nakedness, bare walls and a plain ceiling; let its proportion be ever so excellent, it pleases very little; a cold approbation is the utmost we can reach; a much worse-proportioned room with elegant mouldings and fine festoons, glasses, and other merely ornamental furniture, will make the imagination revolt against the reason; it will please much more than the naked proportion of the first room, which the understanding has so much approved, as admirably fitted for its purposes. What I have here said and before concerning proportion, is by no means to persuade people absurdly to neglect the idea of use in the works of art. It is only to shew that these excellent things, beauty and proportion, are not the same; not that they should either of them be disregarded.

## SECTION VIII.

### THE RECAPITULATION.

On the whole; if such parts in human bodies as are found proportioned, were likewise constantly found beautiful, as they certainly are not; or if they were so situated, as that a pleasure might flow from the comparison, which they seldom are; or if any assignable proportions were found, either in plants or animals, which were always attended with beauty, which never was the case; or, if, where parts were well adapted to their purposes, they were constantly beautiful, and when no use appeared, there was no beauty, which is contrary to all experience; we might conclude, that beauty consisted in proportion or utility. But since, in all respects,

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the case is quite otherwise; we may be satisfied that beauty does not depend on these, let it owe its origin to what else it will.

## SECTION IX.

### PERFECTION NOT THE CAUSE OF BEAUTY.

THERE is another notion current, pretty closely allied to the former; that *perfection* is the constituent cause of beauty. This opinion has been made to extend much farther than to sensible subjects. But in these, so far is perfection, considered as such, from being the cause of beauty; that this quality, where it is highest, in the female sex, almost always carries with it an idea of weakness and imperfection. Women are very sensible of this; for which reason, they learn to lisp, to totter in their walk, to counterfeit weakness, and even sickness. In all this they are guided by nature. Beauty in distress is much the most affecting beauty. Blushing has little less power; and modesty in general, which is a tacit allowance of imperfection, is itself considered as an amiable quality, and certainly heightens every other that is so. I know it is in every body's mouth, that we ought to love perfection. This is to me a sufficient proof, that it is not the proper object of love. Whoever said we *ought* to love a fine woman, or even any of these beautiful animals which please us? Here to be affected, there is no need of the concurrence of our will.

## SECTION X.

### HOW FAR THE IDEA OF BEAUTY MAY BE APPLIED TO THE QUALITIES OF THE MIND.

NOR is this remark in general less applicable to the qualities of the mind. Those virtues which cause admiration, and are of the sublimer kind, produce terrour rather than love; such as fortitude, justice, wisdom, and the like. Never was any man amiable by force of these qualities. Those which engage our hearts, which impress us with a

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sense of loveliness, are the softer virtues; easiness of temper, compassion, kindness, and liberality; though certainly those latter are of less immediate and momentous concern to society, and of less dignity. But it is for that reason that they are so amiable. The great virtues turn principally on dangers, punishments, and troubles, and are exercised rather in preventing the worst mischiefs, than in dispensing favours; and are therefore not lovely, though highly venerable. The subordinate turn on reliefs, gratifications, and indulgences; and are therefore more lovely, though inferiour in dignity. Those persons who creep into the hearts of most people, who are chosen as the companions of their softer hours, and their reliefs from care and anxiety, are never persons of shining qualities or strong virtues. It is rather the soft green of the soul on which we rest our eyes that are fatigued with beholding more glaring objects. It is worth observing how we feel ourselves affected in reading the characters of Cæsar and Cato, as they are so finely drawn and contrasted in Sallust. In one the *ignoscendo, largiundo;* in the other, *nil largiundo.* In one the *miseris perfugium;* in the other, *malis perniciem.* In the latter we have much to admire, much to reverence, and perhaps something to fear; we respect him, but we respect him at a distance. The former makes us familiar with him; we love him, and he leads us whither he pleases. To draw things closer to our first and most natural feelings, I will add a remark made upon reading this section by an ingenious friend. The authority of a father, so useful to our well-being, and so justly venerable upon all accounts, hinders us from having that entire love for him that we have for our mothers, where the parental authority is almost melted down into the mother's fondness and indulgence. But we generally have a great love for our grandfathers in whom this authority is removed a degree from us, and where the weakness of age mellows it into something of a feminine partiality.

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## SECTION XI.

### HOW FAR THE IDEA OF BEAUTY MAY BE APPLIED TO VIRTUE.

From what has been said in the foregoing section we may easily see, how far the application of beauty to virtue, may be made with propriety. The general application of this quality to virtue, has a strong tendency to confound our ideas of things; and it has given rise to an infinite deal of whimsical theory; as the affixing the name of beauty to proportion, congruity, and perfection, as well as to qualities of things yet more remote from our natural ideas of it, and from one another, has tended to confound our ideas of beauty, and left us no standard or rule to judge by, that was not even more uncertain and fallacious than our own fancies. This loose and inaccurate manner of speaking, has therefore misled us both in the theory of taste and of morals; and induced us to remove the science of our duties from their proper basis, (our reason, our relations, and our necessities) to rest it upon foundations altogether visionary and unsubstantial.

## SECTION XII.

### THE REAL CAUSE OF BEAUTY.

Having endeavoured to shew what beauty is not, it remains that we should examine, at least with equal attention, in what it really consists. Beauty is a thing much too affecting not to depend upon some positive qualities. And, since it is no creature of our reason, since it strikes us without any reference to use, and even where no use at all can be discerned, since the order and method of nature is generally very different from our measures and proportions, we must conclude that beauty is, for the greater part, some quality in bodies acting mechanically upon the human mind by the intervention of the senses. We ought therefore to consider attentively in what manner those sen-



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sible qualities are disposed, in such things as by experience we find beautiful, or which excite in us the passion of love, or some correspondent affection.

## SECTION XIII.

### BEAUTIFUL OBJECTS SMALL.

The most obvious point that presents itself to us in examining any object, is its extent or quantity. And what degree of extent prevails in bodies that are held beautiful, may be gathered from the usual manner of expresssion concerning it. I am told that, in most languages, the objects of love are spoken of under diminutive epithets. It is so in all the languages of which I have any knowledge. In Greek the ιον and other diminutive terms are almost always the terms of affection and tenderness. These diminutives were commonly added by the Greeks, to the names of persons with whom they conversed on the terms of friendship and familiarity. Though the Romans were a people of less quick and delicate feelings, yet they naturally slid into the lessening termination upon the same occasions. Anciently in the English language the diminishing *ling* was added to the names of persons and things that were the objects of love. Some we retain still, as *darling* (or little dear,) and few others. But to this day, in ordinary conversation, it is usual to add the endearing name of *little* to every thing we love: the French and Italians make use of these affectionate diminutives even more than we. In the animal creation, out of our own species, it is the small we are inclined to be fond of; little birds, and some of the smaller kinds of beasts. A great beautiful thing is a manner of expression scarcely ever used; but that of a great ugly thing, is very common. There is a wide difference between admiration and love. The sublime, which is the cause of the former, always dwells on great objects, and terrible; the latter on small ones, and pleasing; we submit to what we admire, but we love what submits to us; in one case we are forced, in the other we are flattered, into compliance. In short, the ideas of the sublime

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and the beautiful stand on foundations so different, that it is hard, I had almost said impossible, to think of reconciling them in the same subject, without considerably lessening the effect of the one or the other upon the passions. So that, attending to their quantity, beautiful objects are comparatively small.

## SECTION XIV.

### SMOOTHNESS.

THE next property constantly observable in such objects is *smoothness*:* a quality so essential to beauty, that I do not now recollect any thing beautiful that is not smooth. In trees and flowers, smooth leaves are beautiful; smooth slopes of earth in gardens; smooth streams in the landscape; smooth coats of birds and beasts in animal beauties; in fine women, smooth skins; and in several sorts of ornamental furniture, smooth and polished surfaces. A very considerable part of the effect of beauty is owing to this quality; indeed the most considerable. For take any beautiful object, and give it a broken and rugged surface; and however well formed it may be in other respects, it pleases no longer. Whereas, let it want ever so many of the other constituents, if it wants not this, it becomes more pleasing than almost all the others without it. This seems to me so evident, that I am a good deal surprised, that none who have handled the subject have made any mention of the quality of smoothness, in the enumeration of those that go to the forming of beauty. For indeed any ruggedness, any sudden projection, any sharp angle, is in the highest degree contrary to that idea.

## SECTION XV.

### GRADUAL VARIATION.

BUT as perfectly beautiful bodies are not composed of angular parts, so their parts never continue long in the same

* Part IV. sect. 21.

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right line.* They vary their direction every moment, and they change under the eye by a deviation continually carrying on, but for whose beginning or end you will find it difficult to ascertain a point. The view of a beautiful bird will illustrate this observation. Here we see the head increasing insensibly to the middle, from whence it lessens gradually until it mixes with the neck; the neck loses itself in a larger swell, which continues to the middle of the body, when the whole decreases again to the tail; the tail takes a new direction; but it soon varies its new course: it blends again with the other parts; and the line is perpetually changing, above, below, upon every side. In this description I have before me the idea of a dove; it agrees very well with most of the conditions of beauty. It is smooth and downy; its parts are (to use that expression) melted into one another; you are presented with no sudden protuberance through the whole, and yet the whole is continually changing. Observe that part of a beautiful woman where she is perhaps the most beautiful, about the neck and breasts; the smoothness; the softness; the easy and insensible swell; the variety of the surface, which is never for the smallest space the same; the deceitful maze, through which the unsteady eye slides giddily, without knowing where to fix or whither it is carried. Is not this a demonstration of that change of surface, continual, and yet hardly perceptible at any point, which forms one of the great constituents of beauty? It gives me no small pleasure to find that I can strengthen my theory in this point, by the opinion of the very ingenious Mr. Hogarth; whose idea of the line of beauty I take in general to be extremely just. But the idea of variation, without attending so accurately to the *manner* of the variation, has led him to consider angular figures as beautiful: these figures, it is true, vary greatly; yet they vary in a sudden and broken manner; and I do not find any natural object which is angular, and at the same time beautiful. Indeed few natural objects are entirely angular. But I think those which approach

* Part V. sect. 23.

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the most nearly to it are the ugliest. I must add too, that, so far as I could observe of nature, though the varied line is that alone in which complete beauty is found, yet there is no particular line which is always found in the most completely beautiful, and which is therefore beautiful in preference to all other lines. At least I never could observe it.

## SECTION XVI.

### DELICACY.

An air of robustness and strength is very prejudicial to beauty. An appearance *of delicacy*, and even of fragility, is almost essential to it. Whoever examines the vegetable or animal creation, will find this observation to be founded in nature. It is not the oak, the ash, or the elm, or any of the robust trees of the forest, which we consider as beautiful; they are awful and majestick; they inspire a sort of reverence. It is the delicate myrtle, it is the orange, it is the almond, it is the jasmine, it is the vine, which we look on as vegetable beauties. It is the flowery species, so remarkable for its weakness and momentary duration, that gives us the liveliest idea of beauty and elegance. Among animals, the greyhound is more beautiful than the mastiff; and the delicacy of a gennet, a barb, or an Arabian horse, is much more amiable than the strength and stability of some horses of war or carriage. I need here say little of the fair sex, where I believe the point will be easily allowed me. The beauty of women is considerably owing to their weakness or delicacy, and is even enhanced by their timidity, a quality of mind analogous to it. I would not here be understood to say, that weakness betraying very bad health has any share in beauty; but the ill effect of this is not because it is weakness, but because the ill state of health which produces such weakness, alters the other conditions of beauty; the parts in such a case collapse; the bright colour, the *lumen purpureum juventæ*, is gone; and the fine variation is lost in wrinkles, sudden breaks, and right lines.

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## SECTION XVII.

### BEAUTY IN COLOUR.

As to the colours usually found in beautiful bodies, it may be somewhat difficult to ascertain them, because, in the several parts of nature, there is an infinite variety. However, even in this variety, we may mark out something on which to settle. First, the colours of beautiful bodies must not be dusky or muddy, but clean and fair. Secondly, they must not be of the strongest kind. Those which seem most appropriated to beauty, are the milder of every sort; light greens; soft blues; weak whites; pink reds; and violets. Thirdly, if the colours be strong and vivid, they are always diversified, and the object is never of one strong colour; there are almost always such a number of them, (as in variegated flowers) that the strength and glare of each is considerably abated. In a fine complexion, there is not only some variety in the colouring, but the colours: neither the red nor the white are strong and glaring. Besides, they are mixed in such a manner, and with such gradations, that it is impossible to fix the bounds. On the same principle it is, that the dubious colour in the necks and tails of peacocks, and about the heads of drakes, is so very agreeable. In reality, the beauty both of shape and colouring are as nearly related, as we can well suppose it possible for things of such different natures to be.

## SECTION XVIII.

### RECAPITULATION.

On the whole, the qualities of beauty, as they are merely sensible qualities, are the following; First, to be comparatively small. Secondly, to be smooth. Thirdly, to have a variety in the direction of the parts; but, fourthly, to have those parts not angular, but melted as it were into each other. Fifthly, to be of a delicate frame, without any re-

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markable appearance of strength. Sixthly, to have its colours clear and bright, but not very strong and glaring. Seventhly, or if it should have any glaring colour, to have it diversified with others. These are, I believe, the properties on which beauty depends; properties that operate by nature, and are less liable to be altered by caprice, or confounded by a diversity of tastes, than any other.

## SECTION XIX.

### THE PHYSIOGNOMY.

THE *physiognomy* has a considerable share in beauty, especially in that of our own species. The manners give a certain determination to the countenance; which being observed to correspond pretty regularly with them, is capable of joining the effects of certain agreeable qualities of the mind to those of the body. So that to form a finished human beauty, and to give it its full influence, the face must be expressive of such gentle and amiable qualities, as correspond with the softness, smoothness, and delicacy of the outward form.

## SECTION XX.

### THE EYE.

I HAVE hitherto purposely omitted to speak of the *eye*, which has so great a share in the beauty of the animal creation, as it did not fall so easily under the foregoing heads, though in fact it is reducible to the same principles. I think then, that the beauty of the eye consists, first, in its *clearness*; what *coloured* eye shall please most, depends a good deal on particular fancies; but none are pleased with an eye whose water (to use that term) is dull and muddy.* We are pleased with the eye in this view, on the principle upon which we like diamonds, clear water, glass, and such like transparent substances. Secondly, the motion of the

* Part IV. sect. 25.

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eye contributes to its beauty, by continually shifting its direction; but a slow and languid motion is more beautiful than a brisk one; the latter is enlivening; the former lovely. Thirdly, with regard to the union of the eye with the neighbouring parts, it is to hold the same rule that is given of other beautiful ones; it is not to make a strong deviation from the line of the neighbouring parts; nor to verge into any exact geometrical figure. Besides all this, the eye affects, as it is expressive of some qualities of the mind, and its principal power generally arises from this; so that what we have just said of the physiognomy is applicable here.

## SECTION XXI.

### UGLINESS.

It may perhaps appear like a sort of repetition of what we have before said, to insist here upon the nature of *ugliness*; as I imagine it to be in all respects the opposite to those qualities which we have laid down for the constituents of beauty. But though ugliness be the opposite to beauty, it is not the opposite to proportion and fitness. For it is possible that a thing may be very ugly with any proportions, and with a perfect fitness to any uses. Ugliness I imagine likewise to be consistent enough with an idea of the sublime. But I would by no means insinuate that ugliness of itself is a sublime idea, unless united with such qualities as excite a strong terrour.

## SECTION XXII.

### GRACE.

Gracefulness is an idea not very different from beauty; it consists in much the same things. Gracefulness is an idea belonging to *posture* and *motion*. In both these, to be graceful, it is requisite that there be no appearance of difficulty; there is required a small inflection of the body; and a composure of the parts in such a manner, as not to incumber each other, not to appear divided by sharp and sudden angles.

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In this case, this roundness, this delicacy of attitude and motion, it is that all the magick of grace consists, and what is called its *je ne sçai quoi*; as will be obvious to any observer, who considers attentively the Venus de Medicis, the Antinous, or any statue generally allowed to be graceful in a high degree.

## SECTION XXIII.

### ELEGANCE AND SPECIOUSNESS.

When any body is composed of parts smooth and polished, without pressing upon each other, without shewing any ruggedness or confusion, and at the same time affecting some *regular shape*, I call it *elegant*. It is closely allied to the beautiful, differing from it only in this *regularity*; which, however, as it makes a very material difference in the affection produced, may very well constitute another species. Under this head I rank those delicate and regular works of art, that imitate no determinate object in nature, as elegant buildings, and pieces of furniture. When any object partakes of the above-mentioned qualities, or of those of beautiful bodies, and is withal of great dimensions, it is full as remote from the idea of mere beauty; I call it *fine* or *specious*.

## SECTION XXIV.

### THE BEAUTIFUL IN FEELING.

The foregoing description of beauty, so far as it is taken in by the eye, may be greatly illustrated by describing the nature of objects, which produce a similar effect through the touch. This I call the beautiful in *Feeling*. It corresponds wonderfully with what causes the same species of pleasure to the sight. There is a chain in all our sensations; they are all but different sorts of feelings calculated to be affected by various sorts of objects, but all to be affected after the same manner. All bodies that are plea-



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sant to the touch, are so by the slightness of the resistance they make. Resistance is either to motion along the surface, or to the pressure of the parts on one another: if the former be slight, we call the body smooth; if the latter, soft. The chief pleasure we receive by feeling, is in the one or the other of these qualities; and if there be a combination of both, our pleasure is greatly increased. This is so plain, that it is rather more fit to illustrate other things, than to be illustrated itself by an example. The next source of pleasure in this sense, as in every other, is the continually presenting somewhat new; and we find that bodies which continually vary their surface, are much the most pleasant or beautiful to the feeling, as any one that pleases may experience. The third property in such objects is, that though the surface continually varies its direction, it never varies it suddenly. The application of any thing sudden, even though the impression itself have little or nothing of violence, is disagreeable. The quick application of a finger a little warmer or colder than usual, without notice, makes us start; a slight tap on the shoulder, not expected, has the same effect. Hence it is that angular bodies, bodies that suddenly vary the direction of the outline, afford so little pleasure to the feeling. Every such change is a sort of climbing or falling in miniature; so that squares, triangles, and other angular figures are neither beautiful to the sight nor feeling. Whoever compares his state of mind, on feeling soft, smooth, variegated, unangular bodies, with that in which he finds himself, on the view of a beautiful object, will perceive a very striking analogy in the effects of both; and which may go a good way towards discovering their common cause. Feeling and sight, in this respect, differ in but a few points. The touch takes in the pleasure of softness, which is not primarily an object of sight; the sight, on the other hand, comprehends colour, which can hardly be made perceptible to the touch: the touch again has the advantage in a new idea of pleasure resulting from a moderate degree of warmth; but the eye triumphs in the infinite extent and multiplicity of its objects. But there is such a similitude in the pleasures of

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these senses, that I am apt to fancy, if it were possible that one might discern colour by feeling (as it is said some blind men have done,) that the same colours, and the same disposition of colouring, which are found beautiful to the sight, would be found likewise most grateful to the touch. But, setting aside conjectures, let us pass to the other sense; of hearing.

## SECTION XXV.

### THE BEAUTIFUL IN SOUNDS.

In this sense we find an equal aptitude to be affected in a soft and delicate manner; and how far sweet or beautiful sounds agree with our descriptions of beauty in other senses, the experience of every one must decide. Milton has described this species of musick in one of his juvenile poems.* I need not say that Milton was perfectly well versed in that art; and that no man had a finer ear, with a happier manner of expressing the affections of one sense by metaphors taken from another. The description is as follows:

——— And ever against eating cares,
Lap me in *soft* Lydian airs;
In notes with many a *winding* bout
Of *linked sweetness long drawn* out;
With wanton heed, and giddy cunning,
The *melting* voice through *mazes* running;
*Untwisting* all the chains that tie
The hidden soul of harmony.

Let us parallel this with the softness, the winding surface, the unbroken continuance, the easy gradation of the beautiful in other things; and all the diversities of the several senses, with all their several affections, will rather help to throw lights from one another to finish one clear, consistent idea of the whole, than to obscure it by their intricacy and variety.

To the above-mentioned description I shall add one or

* L'allegro.

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two remarks. The first is; that the beautiful in musick will not bear that loudness and strength of sounds, which may be used to raise other passions; nor notes which are shrill, or harsh, or deep; it agrees best with such as are clear, even, smooth, and weak. The second is; that great variety, and quick transitions from one measure or tone to another, are contrary to the genius of the beautiful in musick. Such transitions* often excite mirth, or other sudden and tumultuous passions; but not that sinking, that melting, that languor, which is the characteristical effect of the beautiful as it regards every sense. The passion excited by beauty is in fact nearer to a species of melancholy, than to jollity and mirth. I do not here mean to confine musick to any one species of notes, or tones, neither is it an art in which I can say I have any great skill. My sole design in this remark is, to settle a consistent idea of beauty. The infinite variety of the affections of the soul will suggest to a good head, and skilful ear, a variety of such sounds as are fitted to raise them. It can be no prejudice to this, to clear and distinguish some few particulars, that belong to the same class, and are consistent with each other, from the immense crowd of different, and sometimes contradictory ideas, that rank vulgarly under the standard of beauty. And of these it is my intention to mark such only of the leading points as shew the conformity of the sense of hearing, with all the other senses in the article of their pleasures.

## SECTION XXVI.

### TASTE AND SMELL.

This general agreement of the senses is yet more evident on minutely considering those of taste and smell. We metaphorically apply the idea of sweetness to sights and sounds; but as the qualities of bodies by which they are fitted to excite either pleasure or pain in these senses, are not so obvious as they are in the others, we shall refer an explana-

* I ne'er am merry, when I hear sweet musick. Shakspeare.

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tion of their analogy, which is a very close one, to that part, wherein we come to consider the common efficient cause of beauty, as it regards all the senses. I do not think any thing better fitted to establish a clear and settled idea of visual beauty, than this way of examining the similar pleasures of other senses; for one part is sometimes clear in one of the senses, that is more obscure in another; and where there is a clear concurrence of all, we may with more certainty speak of any one of them. By this means, they bear witness to each other; nature is, as it were, scrutinized; and we report nothing of her but what we receive from her own information.

## SECTION XXVII.

### THE SUBLIME AND BEAUTIFUL COMPARED.

On closing this general view of beauty, it naturally occurs, that we should compare it with the sublime; and in this comparison there appears a remarkable contrast. For sublime objects are vast in their dimensions, beautiful ones comparatively small: beauty should be smooth and polished; the great, rugged and negligent; beauty should shun the right line, yet deviate from it insensibly; the great in many cases loves the right line; and when it deviates, it often makes a strong deviation: beauty should not be obscure; the great ought to be dark and gloomy: beauty should be light and delicate; the great ought to be solid, and even massive. They are indeed ideas of a very different nature, one being founded on pain, the other on pleasure; and however they may vary afterwards from the direct nature of their causes, yet these causes keep up an eternal distinction between them, a distinction never to be forgotten by any whose business it is to affect the passions. In the infinite variety of natural combinations, we must expect to find the qualities of things the most remote imaginable from each other united in the same object. We must expect also to find combinations of the same kind in the works of art. But when we consider the power of an object upon our pas-

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sions, we must know that when any thing is intended to affect the mind by the force of some predominant property, the affection produced is like to be the more uniform and perfect, if all the other properties or qualities of the object be of the same nature, and tending to the same design as the principal.

> If black and white blend, soften, and unite
> A thousand ways, are there no black and white?

If the qualities of the sublime and beautiful are sometimes found united, does this prove that they are the same; does it prove that they are any way allied; does it prove even that they are not opposite and contradictory? Black and white may soften, may blend; but they are not therefore the same. Nor, when they are so softened and blended with each other, or with different colours, is the power of black as black, or of white as white, so strong as when each stands uniform and distinguished.

THE END OF THE THIRD PART.

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# A PHILOSOPHICAL INQUIRY

## INTO THE ORIGIN OF OUR IDEAS OF THE SUBLIME AND BEAUTIFUL.

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## PART IV.

### SECTION I.

#### OF THE EFFICIENT CAUSE OF THE SUBLIME AND BEAUTIFUL.

WHEN I say, I intend to inquire into the efficient cause of sublimity and beauty, I would not be understood to say, that

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I can come to the ultimate cause. I do not pretend that I shall ever be able to explain, why certain affections of the body produce such a distinct emotion of mind, and no other; or why the body is at all affected by the mind, or the mind by the body. A little thought will shew this to be impossible. But I conceive, if we can discover what affections of the mind produce certain emotions of the body; and what distinct feelings and qualities of body shall produce certain determinate passions in the mind, and no others, I fancy a great deal will be done; something not unuseful towards a distinct knowledge of our passions, so far at least as we have them at present under our consideration. This is all, I believe, we can do. If we could advance a step farther, difficulties would still remain, as we should be still equally distant from the first cause. When Newton first discovered the property of attraction, and settled its laws, he found it served very well to explain several of the most remarkable phænomena in nature; but yet with reference to the general system of things, he could consider attraction but as an effect, whose cause at that time he did not attempt to trace. But when he afterwards began to account for it by a subtile elastick æther, this great man (if in so great a man it be not impious to discover any thing like a blemish) seemed to have quitted his usual cautious manner of philosophising; since, perhaps, allowing all that has been advanced on this subject to be sufficiently proved, I think it leaves us with as many difficulties as it found us. That great chain of causes, which links one to another, even to the throne of God himself, can never be unravelled by any industry of ours. When we go but one step beyond the immediate sensible qualities of things, we go out of our depth. All we do after is but a faint struggle, that shews we are in an element which does not belong to us. So that when I speak of cause, and efficient cause, I only mean certain affections of the mind, that cause certain changes in the body; or certain powers and properties in bodies, that work a change in the mind. As if I were to explain the motion of a body falling to the ground, I would say it was caused by gravity; and I would endeavour to shew after what manner this pow-

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er operated, without attempting to shew why it operated in this manner: or if I were to explain the effects of bodies striking one another by the common laws of percussion, I should not endeavour to explain how motion itself is communicated.

## SECTION II.

### ASSOCIATION.

It is no small bar in the way of our inquiry into the cause of our passions, that the occasion of many of them are given, and that their governing motions are communicated at a time when we have not capacity to reflect on them; at a time of which all sort of memory is worn out of our minds. For besides such things as affect us in various manners, according to their natural powers, there are associations made at that early season, which we find it very hard afterwards to distinguish from natural effects. Not to mention the unaccountable antipathies which we find in many persons, we all find it impossible to remember when a steep became more terrible than a plain; or fire or water more terrible than a clod of earth; though all these are very probably either conclusions from experience, or arising from the premonitions of others; and some of them impressed, in all likelihood, pretty late. But as it must be allowed that many things affect us after a certain manner, not by any natural powers they have for that purpose, but by association; so it would be absurd, on the other hand, to say that all things affect us by association only; since some things must have been originally and naturally agreeable or disagreeable, from which the others derive their associated powers; and it would be, I fancy, to little purpose to look for the cause of our passions in association, until we fail of it in the natural properties of things.

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## SECTION III.

### CAUSE OF PAIN AND FEAR.

I HAVE before observed,* that whatever is qualified to cause terrour, is a foundation capable of the sublime; to which I add, that not only these, but many things from which we cannot probably apprehend any danger, have a similar effect, because they operate in a similar manner. I observed too,† that whatever produces pleasure, positive and original pleasure, is fit to have beauty engrafted on it. Therefore, to clear up the nature of these qualities, it may be necessary to explain the nature of pain and pleasure on which they depend. A man who suffers under violent bodily pain, (I suppose the most violent, because the effect may be the more obvious;) I say a man in great pain has his teeth set, his eye-brows are violently contracted, his forehead is wrinkled, his eyes are dragged inwards, and rolled with great vehemence, his hair stands an end, the voice is forced out in short shrieks and groans, and the whole fabrick totters. Fear or terrour, which is an apprehension of pain or death, exhibits exactly the same effects, approaching in violence to those just mentioned, in proportion to the nearness of the cause, and the weakness of the subject. This is not only so in the human species: but I have more than once observed in dogs, under an apprehension of punishment, that they have writhed their bodies, and yelped, and howled, as if they had actually felt the blows. From hence I conclude, that pain and fear act upon the same parts of the body, and in the same manner, though somewhat differing in degree: that pain and fear consist in an unnatural tension of the nerves; that this is sometimes accompanied with an unnatural strength, which sometimes suddenly changes into an extraordinary weakness; that these effects often come on alternately, and are sometimes mixed with each other. This is the nature of

* Part I. sect. 8. † Part I. sect. 10.



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all convulsive agitations, especially in weaker subjects, which are the most liable to the severest impressions of pain and fear. The only difference between pain and terrour is, that things which cause pain operate on the mind, by the intervention of the body; whereas things that cause terrour, generally affect the bodily organs by the operation of the mind suggesting the danger; but both agreeing, either primarily, or secondarily, in producing a tension, contraction, or violent emotion of the nerves,* they agree likewise in every thing else. For it appears very clearly to me, from this, as well as from many other examples, that when the body is disposed, by any means whatsoever, to such emotions as it would acquire by the means of a certain passion; it will of itself excite something very like that passion in the mind.

## SECTION IV.

### CONTINUED.

To this purpose Mr. Spon, in his Récherches d'Antiquité, gives us a curious story of the celebrated physiognomist Campanella. This man, it seems, had not only made very accurate observations on human faces, but was very expert in mimicking such as were any way remarkable. When he had a mind to penetrate into the inclinations of those he had to deal with, he composed his face, his gesture, and his whole body, as nearly as he could into the exact similitude of the person he intended to examine; and then carefully observed what turn of mind he seemed to acquire by this change. So that, says my author, he was able to enter into the dispositions and thoughts of people as effectually as if he had been changed into the very men. I have often observed, that on mimicking the looks and gestures of angry, or placid, or

* I do not here enter into the question debated among physiologists, whether pain be the effect of a contraction, or a tension of the nerves. Either will serve my purpose; for by tension, I mean no more than a violent pulling of the fibres, which compose any muscle or membrane in whatever way this is done.

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frighted, or daring men, I have involuntarily found my mind turned to that passion, whose appearance I endeavoured to imitate; nay, I am convinced it is hard to avoid it, though one strove to separate the passion from its correspondent gestures. Our minds and bodies are so closely and intimately connected, that one is incapable of pain or pleasure without the other. Campanella, of whom we have been speaking, could so abstract his attention from any sufferings of his body, that he was able to endure the rack itself without much pain; and in lesser pains every body must have observed, that when we can employ our attention on any thing else, the pain has been for a time suspended: on the other hand, if by any means the body is indisposed to perform such gestures, or to be stimulated into such emotions as any passion usually produces in it, that passion itself never can arise, though its cause should be never so strongly in action; though it should be merely mental, and immediately affecting none of the senses. As an opiate, or spirituous liquors, shall suspend the operation of grief, or fear, or anger, in spite of all our efforts to the contrary; and this by inducing in the body a disposition contrary to that which it receives from these passions.

## SECTION V.

### HOW THE SUBLIME IS PRODUCED.

HAVING considered terrour as producing an unnatural tension and certain violent emotions of the nerves; it easily follows from what we have just said, that whatever is fitted to produce such a tension must be productive of a passion similar to terrour,* and consequently must be a source of the sublime, though it should have no idea of danger connected with it. So that little remains towards shewing the cause of the sublime, but to shew that the instances we have given of it in the second part relate to such things, as are fitted by nature to produce this sort of tension, either by the primary

* Part II. sect. 2.

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operation of the mind or the body. With regard to such things as affect by the associated idea of danger, there can be no doubt but that they produce terrour, and act by some modification of that passion; and that terrour, when sufficiently violent, raises the emotions of the body just mentioned, can as little be doubted. But if the sublime is built on terrour, or some passion like it, which has pain for its object, it is previously proper to inquire how any species of delight can be derived from a cause so apparently contrary to it. I say *delight*, because, as I have often remarked, it is very evidently different in its cause, and in its own nature, from actual and positive pleasure.

## SECTION VI.

### HOW PAIN CAN BE A CAUSE OF DELIGHT.

Providence has so ordered it, that a state of rest and inaction, however it may flatter our indolence, should be productive of many inconveniencies; that it should generate such disorders, as may force us to have recourse to some labour, as a thing absolutely requisite to make us pass our lives with tolerable satisfaction; for the nature of rest is to suffer all the parts of our bodies to fall into a relaxation, that not only disables the members from performing their functions, but takes away the vigorous tone of fibre which is requisite for carrying on the natural and necessary secretions. At the same time, that in this languid inactive state, the nerves are more liable to the most horrid convulsions, than when they are sufficiently braced and strengthened. Melancholy, dejection, despair, and often self murder, is the consequence of the gloomy view we take of things in this relaxed state of body. The best remedy for all these evils is exercise or *labour;* and labour is a surmounting of *difficulties*, an exertion of the contracting power of the muscles; and as such resembles pain, which consists in tension or contraction, in every thing but degree. Labour is not only requisite to preserve the coarser organs in a state fit for their functions; but it is equally necessary to these finer

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and more delicate organs, on which, and by which, the imagination and perhaps the other mental powers act. Since it is probable, that not only the inferiour parts of the soul, as the passions are called, but the understanding itself makes use of some fine corporeal instruments in its operation; though what they are, and where they are, may be somewhat hard to settle: but that it does make use of such, appears from hence; that a long exercise of the mental powers induces a remarkable lassitude of the whole body; and on the other hand that great bodily labour, or pain, weakens and sometimes actually destroys the mental faculties. Now, as a due exercise is essential to the coarse muscular parts of the constitution, and that without this rousing they would become languid and diseased, the very same rule holds with regard to those finer parts we have mentioned; to have them in proper order, they must be shaken and worked to a proper degree.

## SECTION VII.

### EXERCISE NECESSARY FOR THE FINER ORGANS.

As common labour, which is a mode of pain, is the exercise of the grosser, a mode of terrour is the exercise of the finer parts of the system; and if a certain mode of pain be of such a nature as to act upon the eye or the ear, as they are the most delicate organs, the affection approaches more nearly to that which has a mental cause. In all these cases, if the pain and terrour are so modified as not to be actually noxious; if the pain is not carried to violence, and the terrour is not conversant about the present destruction of the person, as these emotions clear the parts, whether fine or gross, of a dangerous and troublesome incumbrance, they are capable of producing delight; not pleasure, but a sort of delightful horrour, a sort of tranquillity tinged with terrour; which, as it belongs to self-preservation, is one of the strongest of all the passions. Its object is the sublime.* Its highest degree I call *astonishment;* the subordinate de-

* Part II. sect. 2.

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grees are awe, reverence, and respect, which by the very etymology of the words, shew from what source they are derived, and how they stand distinguished from positive pleasure.

## SECTION VIII.

### WHY THINGS NOT DANGEROUS PRODUCE A PASSION LIKE TERROUR.

*A MODE of terrour or pain is always the cause of the sublime. For terrour, or associated danger, the foregoing explication is, I believe, sufficient. It will require something more trouble to shew, that such examples as I have given of the sublime in the second part, are capable of producing a mode of pain, and of being thus allied to terrour, and to be accounted for on the same principles. And first of such objects as are great in their dimensions. I speak of visual objects.

## SECTION IX.

### WHY VISUAL OBJECTS OF GREAT DIMENSIONS ARE SUBLIME.

VISION is performed by having a picture formed by the rays of light which are reflected from the object painted in one piece, instantaneously, on the retina, or last nervous part of the eye. Or, according to others, there is but one point of any object painted on the eye in such a manner as to be perceived at once; but by moving the eye, we gather up, with great celerity, the several parts of the object, so as to form one uniform piece. If the former opinion be allowed, it will be considered,† that though all the light reflected from a large body should strike the eye in one instant; yet we must suppose that the body itself is formed of a vast number of distinct points, every one of which, or the ray from every one, makes an impression on the retina. So that,

* Part I. sect. 7. Part II. sect. 2.
† Part II. sect. 7.

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though the image of one point should cause but a small tension of this membrane, another, and another, and another stroke, must in their progress cause a very great one, until it arrives at last to the highest degree; and the whole capacity of the eye, vibrating in all its parts, must approach near to the nature of what causes pain, and consequently must produce an idea of the sublime. Again, if we take it, that one point only of an object is distinguishable at once; the matter will amount nearly to the same thing, or rather it will make the origin of the sublime from greatness of dimension yet clearer. For if but one point is observed at once, the eye must traverse the vast space of such bodies with great quickness, and consequently the fine nerves and muscles destined to the motion of that part must be very much strained; and their great sensibility must make them highly affected by this straining. Besides, it signifies just nothing to the effect produced, whether a body has its parts connected and makes its impression at once; or, making but one impression of a point at a time, it causes a succession of the same or others so quickly as to make them seem united; as is evident from the common effect of whirling about a lighted torch or piece of wood: which if done with celerity, seems a circle of fire.

## SECTION X.

### UNITY WHY REQUISITE TO VASTNESS.

It may be objected to this theory, that the eye generally receives an equal number of rays at all times, and that therefore a great object cannot affect it by the number of rays, more than that variety of objects which the eye must always discern whilst it remains open. But to this I answer, that admitting an equal number of rays, or an equal quantity of luminous particles to strike the eye at all times, yet if these rays frequently vary their nature, now to blue, now to red, and so on, or their manner of termination, as to a number of petty squares, triangles, or the like, at every change, whether of colour or shape, the organ has a sort of relaxation or

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rest; but this relaxation and labour so often interrupted, is by no means productive of ease; neither has it the effect of vigorous and uniform labour. Whoever has remarked the different effects of some strong exercise, and some little piddling action, will understand why a teasing fretful employment, which at once wearies and weakens the body, should have nothing great; these sorts of impulses, which are rather teasing than painful, by continually and suddenly altering their tenour and direction, prevent that full tension, that species of uniform labour, which is allied to strong pain, and causes the sublime. The sum total of things of various kinds, though it should equal the number of the uniform parts composing some *one* entire object, is not equal in its effect upon the organs of our bodies. Besides the one already assigned, there is another very strong reason for the difference. The mind in reality hardly ever can attend diligently to more than one thing at a time; if this thing be little, the effect is little, and a number of other little objects cannot engage the attention; the mind is bounded by the bounds of the object; and what is not attended to, and what does not exist, are much the same in effect; but the eye or the mind (for in this case there is no difference) in great uniform objects does not readily arrive at their bounds; it has no rest, whilst it contemplates them; the image is much the same every where. So that every thing great by its quantity must necessarily be one, simple and entire.

## SECTION XI.

### THE ARTIFICIAL INFINITE.

We have observed, that a species of greatness arises from the artificial infinite; and that this infinite consists in an uniform succession of great parts: we observed too, that the same uniform succession had a like power in sounds. But because the effects of many things are clearer in one of the senses than in another, and that all the senses bear analogy to, and illustrate one another, I shall

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begin with this power in sounds, as the cause of the sublimity from succession is rather more obvious in the sense of hearing. And I shall here once for all, observe, that an investigation of the natural and mechanical causes of our passions, besides the curiosity of the subject, gives, if they are discovered, a double strength and lustre to any rules we deliver on such matters. When the ear receives any simple sound, it is struck by a single pulse of the air, which makes the ear-drum and the other membranous parts vibrate according to the nature and species of the stroke. If the stroke be strong, the organ of hearing suffers a considerable degree of tension. If the stroke be repeated pretty soon after, the repetition causes an expectation of another stroke. And it must be observed, that expectation itself causes a tension. This is apparent in many animals, who, when they prepare for hearing any sound, rouse themselves, and prick up their ears: so that here the effect of the sounds is considerably augmented by a new auxiliary, the expectation. But though after a number of strokes, we expect still more, not being able to ascertain the exact time of their arrival, when they arrive, they produce a sort of surprise, which increases this tension yet further. For I have observed, that when at any time I have waited very earnestly for some sound, that returned at intervals, (as the successive firing of cannon) though I fully expected the return of the sound, when it came it always made me start a little; the ear-drum suffered a convulsion, and the whole body consented with it. The tension of the part thus increasing at every blow, by the united forces of the stroke itself, the expectation, and the surprise, it is worked up to such a pitch as to be capable of the sublime; it is brought just to the verge of pain. Even when the cause has ceased, the organs of hearing being often successively struck in a similar manner, continue to vibrate in that manner for some time longer; this is an additional help to the greatness of the effect.



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## SECTION XII.

### THE VIBRATIONS MUST BE SIMILAR.

But if the vibration be not similar at every impression, it can never be carried beyond the number of actual impressions; for, move any body as a pendulum, in one way, and it will continue to oscillate in an arch of the same circle, until the known causes make it rest; but if after first putting it in motion in one direction, you push it into another, it can never reassume the first direction; because it can never move itself, and consequently it can have but the effect of that last motion; whereas, if in the same direction you act upon it several times, it will describe a greater arch, and move a longer time.

## SECTION XIII.

### THE EFFECT OF SUCCESSION IN VISUAL OBJECTS EXPLAINED.

If we can comprehend clearly how things operate upon one of our senses, there can be very little difficulty in conceiving in what manner they affect the rest. To say a great deal therefore upon the corresponding affections of every sense, would tend rather to fatigue us by an useless repetition, than to throw any new light upon the subject, by that ample and diffuse manner of treating it; but as in this discourse we chiefly attach ourselves to the sublime, as it affects the eye, we shall consider particularly why a successive disposition of uniform parts in the same right line should be sublime,* and upon what principle this disposition is enabled to make a comparatively small quantity of matter produce a grander effect, than a much larger quantity disposed in another manner. To avoid the perplexity of general notions; let us set before our eyes a colonnade of uniform pillars planted in a right line; let us take our stand in such a manner, that the eye may shoot along this colonnade, for it

* Part II. sect. 10.

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has its best effect in this view. In our present situation it is plain, that the rays from the first round pillar will cause in the eye a vibration of that species; an image of the pillar itself. The pillar immediately succeeding increases it; that which follows renews and enforces the impression; each in its order as it succeeds, repeats impulse after impulse, and stroke after stroke, until the eye, long exercised in one particular way, cannot lose that object immediately; and being violently roused by this continued agitation, it presents the mind with a grand or sublime conception. But instead of viewing a rank of uniform pillars; let us suppose that they succeed each other, a round and a square one alternately. In this case the vibration caused by the first round pillar perishes as soon as it is formed; and one of quite another sort (the square) directly occupies its place; which however it resigns as quickly to the round one; and thus the eye proceeds, alternately, taking up one image, and laying down another, as long as the building continues. From whence it is obvious, that at the last pillar, the impression is as far from continuing as it was at the very first; because in fact, the sensory can receive no distinct impression but from the last; and it can never of itself resume a dissimilar impression: besides every variation of the object is a rest and relaxation to the organs of sight; and these reliefs prevent that powerful emotion so necessary to produce the sublime. To produce therefore a perfect grandeur in such things as we have been mentioning, there should be a perfect simplicity, an absolute uniformity in disposition, shape, and colouring. Upon this principle of succession and uniformity it may be asked, why a long bare wall should not be a more sublime object than a colonnade; since the succession is no way interrupted; since the eye meets no check; since nothing more uniform can be conceived? A long bare wall is certainly not so grand an object as a colonnade of the same length and height. It is not altogether difficult to account for this difference. When we look at a naked wall, from the evenness of the object, the eye runs along its whole space, and arrives quickly at its termination; the eye meets nothing which may interrupt its progress; but then it meets

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nothing which may detain it a proper time to produce a very great and lasting effect. The view of a bare wall, if it be of a great height and length, is undoubtedly grand; but this is only *one* idea, and not a *repetition* of *similar* ideas: it is therefore great, not so much upon the principle of *infinity*, as upon that of *vastness*. But we are not so powerfully affected with any one impulse, unless it be one of a prodigious force indeed, as we are with a succession of similar impulses; because the nerves of the sensory do not (if I may use the expression) acquire a habit of repeating the same feeling in such a manner as to continue it longer than its cause is in action; besides all the effects which I have attributed to expectation and surprise in sect. 11, can have no place in a bare wall.

## SECTION XIV.

### LOCKE'S OPINION CONCERNING DARKNESS CONSIDERED.

It is Mr. Locke's opinion, that darkness is not naturally an idea of terrour; and that though an excessive light is painful to the sense, that the greatest excess of darkness is no ways troublesome. He observes indeed in another place, that a nurse or an old woman having once associated the idea of ghosts and goblins with that of darkness, night ever after becomes painful and horrible to the imagination. The authority of this great man is doubtless as great as that of any man can be, and it seems to stand in the way of our general principle.* We have considered darkness as a cause of the sublime; and we have all along considered the sublime as depending on some modification of pain or terrour: so that if darkness be no way painful or terrible to any, who have not had their minds early tainted with superstitions, it can be no source of the sublime to them. But, with all deference to such an authority, it seems to me, that an association of a more general nature, an association which takes in all mankind, may make darkness terrible; for in

* Part II. sect. 3.

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utter darkness it is impossible to know in what degree of safety we stand; we are ignorant of the objects that surround us; we may every moment strike against some dangerous obstruction; we may fall down a precipice the first step we take; and if an enemy approach, we know not in what quarter to defend ourselves; in such a case strength is no sure protection; wisdom can only act by guess; the boldest are staggered, and he who would pray for nothing else towards his defence is forced to pray for light.

Ζευ πατερ, αλλα συ ρυσαι υπ' ηερος υιας Αχαιων
Ποιησον δ' αιθρην, δος δ' οφθαλμοισιν ιδεσθαι·
Εν δε φαει και ολεσσον.——

As to the association of ghosts, and goblins; surely it is more natural to think, that darkness, being originally an idea of terrour, was chosen as a fit scene for such terrible representations, than that such representations have made darkness terrible. The mind of man very easily slides into an errour of the former sort; but it is very hard to imagine, that the effect of an idea so universally terrible in all times, and in all countries, as darkness, could possibly have been owing to a set of idle stories, or to any cause of a nature so trivial, and of an operation so precarious.

## SECTION XV.

### DARKNESS TERRIBLE IN ITS OWN NATURE.

Perhaps it may appear on inquiry, that blackness and darkness are in some degree painful by their natural operation, independent of any associations whatsoever. I must observe, that the ideas of darkness and blackness are much the same; and they differ only in this, that blackness is a more confined idea. Mr. Cheselden has given us a very curious story of a boy, who had been born blind, and continued so until he was thirteen or fourteen years old; he was then couched for a cataract, by which operation he received his sight. Among many remarkable particulars that attended his first perceptions and judgments on visual objects,

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Cheselden tells us, that the first time the boy saw a black object, it gave him great uneasiness; and that some time after, upon accidentally seeing a negro woman, he was struck with great horrour at the sight. The horrour, in this case, can scarcely be supposed to arise from any association. The boy appears by the account to have been particularly observing and sensible for one of his age; and therefore it is probable, if the great uneasiness he felt at the first sight of black had arisen from its connexion with any other disagreeable ideas, he would have observed and mentioned it. For an idea, disagreeable only by association, has the cause of its ill effect on the passions evident enough at the first impression; in ordinary cases, it is indeed frequently lost; but this is, because the original association was made very early, and the consequent impression repeated often. In our instance, there was no time for such an habit; and there is no reason to think that the ill effects of black on his imagination were more owing to its connexion with any disagreeable ideas, than that the good effects of more cheerful colours were derived from their connexion with pleasing ones. They had both probably their effects from their natural operation.

## SECTION XVI.

### WHY DARKNESS IS TERRIBLE.

It may be worth while to examine how darkness can operate in such a manner as to cause pain. It is observable, that still as we recede from the light, nature has so contrived it, that the pupil is enlarged by the retiring of the iris, in proportion to our recess. Now, instead of declining from it but a little, suppose that we withdraw entirely from the light; it is reasonable to think, that the contraction of the radial fibres of the iris is proportionably greater; and that this part may by great darkness come to be so contracted, as to strain the nerves that compose it beyond their natural tone; and by this means to produce a painful sensation. Such a tension it seems there certainly is, whilst we are in-

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volved in darkness; for in such a state whilst the eye remains open, there is a continual nisus to receive light; this is manifest from the flashes and luminous appearances which often seem in these circumstances to play before it; and which can be nothing but the effect of spasms, produced by its own efforts in pursuit of its object; several other strong impulses will produce the idea of light in the eye, besides the substance of light itself, as we experience on many occasions. Some who allow darkness to be a cause of the sublime, would infer, from the dilatation of the pupil, that a relaxation may be productive of the sublime, as well as convulsion: but they do not I believe consider that although the circular ring of the iris be in some sense a sphincter, which may possibly be dilated by a simple relaxation, yet in one respect it differs from most of the other sphincters of the body, that it is furnished with antagonist muscles, which are the radial fibres of the iris: no sooner does the circular muscle begin to relax, than these fibres, wanting their counterpoise, are forcibly drawn back, and open the pupil to a considerable wideness. But though we were not apprised of this, I believe any one will find, if he opens his eyes and makes an effort to see in a dark place, that a very perceivable pain ensues. And I have heard some ladies remark, that after having worked a long time upon a ground of black, their eyes were so pained and weakened, they could hardly see. It may perhaps be objected to this theory of the mechanical effect of darkness, that the ill effects of darkness or blackness seem rather mental than corporeal; and I own it is true, that they do so; and so do all those that depend on the affections of the finer parts of our system. The ill effects of bad weather appear often no otherwise, than in a melancholy and dejection of spirits; though without doubt, in this case, the bodily organs suffer first, and the mind through these organs.

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## SECTION XVII.

### THE EFFECTS OF BLACKNESS.

BLACKNESS is but a *partial darkness;* and therefore it derives some of its powers from being mixed and surrounded with coloured bodies. In its own nature, it cannot be considered as a colour. Black bodies, reflecting none, or but a few rays, with regard to sight, are but as so many vacant spaces dispersed among the objects we view. When the eye lights on one of these vacuities, after having been kept in some degree of tension by the play of the adjacent colours upon it, it suddenly falls into a relaxation; out of which it as suddenly recovers by a convulsive spring. To illustrate this; let us consider, that when we intend to sit on a chair, and find it much lower than was expected, the shock is very violent; much more violent than could be thought from so slight a fall as the difference between one chair and another can possibly make. If, after descending a flight of stairs, we attempt inadvertently to take another step in the manner of the former ones, the shock is extremely rude and disagreeable; and by no art can we cause such a shock by the same means when we expect and prepare for it. When I say that this is owing to having the change made contrary to expectation; I do not mean solely, when the *mind* expects. I mean likewise, that when an organ of sense is for some time affected in some one manner, if it be suddenly affected otherwise, there ensues a convulsive motion; such a convulsion as is caused when any thing happens against the expectance of the mind. And though it may appear strange that such a change as produces a relaxation, should immediately produce a sudden convulsion; it is yet most certainly so, and so in all the senses. Every one knows that sleep is a relaxation; and that silence, where nothing keeps the organs of hearing in action, is in general fittest to bring on this relaxation; yet when a sort of murmuring sounds dispose a man to sleep, let these sounds cease suddenly, and the person immediately awakes; that

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is, the parts are braced up suddenly, and he awakes. This I have often experienced myself, and I have heard the same from observing persons. In like manner, if a person in broad day light were falling asleep, to introduce a sudden darkness would prevent his sleep for that time, though silence and darkness in themselves, and not suddenly introduced, are very favourable to it. This I knew only by conjecture on the analogy of the senses when I first digested these observations; but I have since experienced it. And I have often experienced, and so have a thousand others, that on the first inclining towards sleep, we have been suddenly awakened with a most violent start; and that this start was generally preceded by a sort of dream of our falling down a precipice: whence does this strange motion arise, but from the too sudden relaxation of the body, which by some mechanism in nature restores itself by as quick and vigorous an exertion of the contracting power of the muscles! The dream itself is caused by this relaxation: and it is of too uniform a nature to be attributed to any other cause. The parts relax too suddenly, which is in the nature of falling; and this accident of the body induces this image in the mind. When we are in a confirmed state of health and vigour, as all changes are then less sudden, and less on the extreme, we can seldom complain of this disagreeable sensation.

## SECTION XVIII.

### THE EFFECTS OF BLACKNESS MODERATED.

THOUGH the effects of black be painful originally, we must not think they always continue so. Custom reconciles us to every thing. After we have been used to the sight of black objects, the terrour abates, and the smoothness and glossiness or some agreeable accident of bodies so coloured, softens in some measure the horrour and sternness of their original nature; yet the nature of their original impression still continues. Black will always have something melancholy in it, because the sensory will always



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find the change to it from other colours too violent; or if it occupy the whole compass of the sight, it will then be darkness; and what was said of darkness will be applicable here. I do not purpose to go into all that might be said to illustrate this theory of the effects of light and darkness; neither will I examine all the different effects produced by the various modifications and mixtures of these two causes. If the foregoing observations have any foundation in nature, I conceive them very sufficient to account for all the phænomena that can arise from all the combinations of black with other colours. To enter into every particular, or to answer every objection, would be an endless labour. We have only followed the most leading roads; and we shall observe the same conduct in our inquiry into the cause of beauty.

## SECTION XIX.

### THE PHYSICAL CAUSE OF LOVE.

When we have before us such objects as excite love and complacency; the body is affected, so far as I could observe, much in the following manner: the head reclines something on one side; the eye-lids are more closed than usual, and the eyes roll gently with an inclination to the object; the mouth is a little opened, and the breath drawn slowly, with now and then a low sigh; the whole body is composed, and the hands fall idly to the sides. All this is accompanied with an inward sense of melting and languor. These appearances are always proportioned to the degree of beauty in the object, and of sensibility in the observer. And this gradation from the highest pitch of beauty and sensibility, even to the lowest of mediocrity and indifference, and their correspondent effects, ought to be kept in view, else this description will seem exaggerated, which it certainly is not. But from this description it is almost impossible not to conclude, that beauty acts by relaxing the solids of the whole system. There are all the appearances of such a relaxation; and a relaxation somewhat below the natural tone seems to

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me to be the cause of all positive pleasure. Who is a stranger to that manner of expression so common in all times and in all countries, of being softened, relaxed, enervated, dissolved, melted away by pleasure? The universal voice of mankind, faithful to their feelings, concurs in affirming this uniform and general effect: and although some odd and particular instance may perhaps be found, wherein there appears a considerable degree of positive pleasure, without all the characters of relaxation, we must not therefore reject the conclusion we had drawn from a concurrence of many experiments; but we still must retain it, subjoining the exceptions which may occur according to the judicious rule laid down by Sir Isaac Newton in the third book of his Opticks. Our position will, I conceive, appear confirmed beyond any reasonable doubt, if we can shew that such things as we have already observed to be the genuine constituents of beauty, have each of them, separately taken, a natural tendency to relax the fibres. And if it must be allowed us, that the appearance of the human body, when all these constituents are united together before the sensory, further favours this opinion, we may venture, I believe, to conclude, that the passion called love is produced by this relaxation. By the same method of reasoning which we have used in the inquiry into the causes of the sublime, we may likewise conclude, that as a beautiful object presented to the sense, by causing a relaxation of the body, produces the passion of love in the mind; so of by any means the passion should first have its origin in the mind, a relaxation of the outward organs will as certainly ensue in a degree proportioned to the cause.

## SECTION XX.

### WHY SMOOTHNESS IS BEAUTIFUL.

It is to explain the true cause of visual beauty, that I call in the assistance of the other senses. If it appears that *smoothness* is a principal cause of pleasure to the touch, taste, smell, and hearing, it will be easily admitted a constituent of visual beauty; especially as we have before shewn, that this

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quality is found almost without exception in all bodies that are by general consent held beautiful. There can be no doubt that bodies which are rough and angular, rouse and vellicate the organs of feeling, causing a sense of pain, which consists in the violent tension or contraction of the muscular fibres. On the contrary, the application of smooth bodies relaxes; gentle stroking with a smooth hand allays violent pains and cramps, and relaxes the suffering parts from their unnatural tension; and it has therefore very often no mean effect in removing swellings and obstructions. The sense of feeling is highly gratified with smooth bodies. A bed smoothly laid and soft, that is, where the resistance is every way inconsiderable, is a great luxury, disposing to an universal relaxation, and inducing beyond any thing else, that species of it called sleep.

## SECTION XXI.

### SWEETNESS, ITS NATURE.

Nor is it only in the touch, that smooth bodies cause positive pleasure by relaxation. In the smell and taste, we find all things agreeable to them, and which are commonly called sweet, to be of a smooth nature, and that they all evidently tend to relax their respective sensories. Let us first consider the taste. Since it is most easy to inquire into the property of liquids, and since all things seem to want a fluid vehicle to make them tasted at all, I intend rather to consider the liquid than the solid parts of our food. The vehicles of all tastes are *water* and *oil*. And what determines the taste is some salt, which affects variously according to its nature, or its manner of being combined with other things. Water and oil, simply considered, are capable of giving some pleasure to the taste. Water, when simple, is insipid, inodorous, colourless, and smooth; it is found, when *not cold*, to be a great resolver of spasms, and lubricator of the fibres; this power it probably owes to its smoothness. For as fluidity depends, according to the most general opinion, on the roundness, smoothness, and weak cohesion of the component

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parts of any body; and as water acts merely as a simple fluid; it follows, that the cause of its fluidity is likewise the cause of its relaxing quality; namely, the smoothness and slippery texture of its parts. The other fluid vehicle of tastes is *oil*. This too, when simple, is insipid, inodorous, colourless, and smooth to the touch and taste. It is smoother than water, and in many cases yet more relaxing. Oil is in some degree pleasant to the eye, the touch, and the taste, insipid as it is. Water is not so grateful; which I do not know on what principle to account for, other than that water is not so soft and smooth. Suppose that to this oil or water were added a certain quantity of a specifick salt, which had a power of putting the nervous papillæ of the tongue into a gentle vibratory motion; as suppose sugar dissolved in it. The smoothness of the oil, and the vibratory-power of the salt, cause the sense we call sweetness. In all sweet bodies, sugar, or a substance very little different from sugar, is constantly found; every species of salt, examined by the microscope, has its own distinct, regular, invariable form. That of nitre is a pointed oblong; that of sea-salt an exact cube; that of sugar a perfect globe. If you have tried how smooth globular bodies, as the marbles with which boys amuse themselves, have affected the touch when they are rolled backward and forward and over one another, you will easily conceive how sweetness, which consists in a salt of such nature, affects the taste; for a single globe, (though somewhat pleasant to the feeling) yet by the regularity of its form, and the somewhat too sudden deviation of its parts from a right line, is nothing near so pleasant to the touch as several globes, where the hand gently rises to one and falls to another; and this pleasure is greatly increased if the globes are in motion, and sliding over one another; for this soft variety prevents that weariness, which the uniform disposition of the several globes would otherwise produce. Thus in sweet liquors, the parts of the fluid vehicle, though most probably round, are yet so minute, as to conceal the figure of their component parts from the nicest inquisition of the microscope; and consequently being so excessively minute, they have a sort of flat simplicity to the

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taste, resembling the effects of plain smooth bodies to the touch; for if a body be composed of round parts excessively small, and packed pretty closely together, the surface will be both to the sight and touch as if it were nearly plain and smooth. It is clear from their unveiling their figure to the microscope, that the particles of sugar are considerably larger than those of water or oil, and consequently, that their effects from their roundness will be more distinct and palpable to the nervous papillæ of that nice organ the tongue: they will induce that sense called sweetness, which in a weak manner we discover in oil, and in a yet weaker in water; for, insipid as they are, water and oil are in some degree sweet; and it may be observed, that insipid things of all kinds approach more nearly to the nature of sweetness than to that of any other taste.

## SECTION XXII.

### SWEETNESS RELAXING.

In the other senses we have remarked, that smooth things are relaxing. Now it ought to appear that sweet things, which are the smooth of taste, are relaxing too. It is remarkable, that in some languages soft and sweet have but one name. *Doux* in French signifies soft as well as sweet. The Latin *Dulcis*, and the Italian *Dolce*, have in many cases the same double signification. That sweet things are generally relaxing, is evident; because all such, especially those which are most oily, taken frequently, or in a large quantity, very much enfeeble the tone of the stomach. Sweet smells, which bear a great affinity to sweet tastes, relax very remarkably. The smell of flowers disposes people to drowsiness; and this relaxing effect is further apparent from the prejudice which people of weak nerves receive from their use. It were worth while to examine, whether tastes of this kind, sweet ones, tastes that are caused by smooth oils and a relaxing salt, are not the originally pleasant tastes. For many, which use has rendered such, were not at all agreeable at first. The way to examine this is, to try

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what nature has originally provided for us, which she has undoubtedly made originally pleasant; and to analyse this provision. *Milk*, is the first support of our childhood. The component parts of this are water, oil, and a sort of a very sweet salt, called the sugar of milk. All these when blended have a great *smoothness* to the taste, and a relaxing quality to the skin. The next thing children covet is *fruit*, and of fruits those principally which are sweet; and every one knows that the sweetness of fruit is caused by a subtile oil, and such salt as that mentioned in the last section. Afterwards, custom, habit, the desire of novelty, and a thousand other causes, confound, adulterate, and change our palates, so that we can no longer reason with any satisfaction about them. Before we quit this article, we must observe, that as smooth things are, as such, agreeable to the taste, and are found of a relaxing quality; so, on the other hand, things which are found by experience to be of a strengthening quality, and fit to brace the fibres, are almost universally rough and pungent to the taste, and in many cases rough even to the touch. We often apply the quality of sweetness, metaphorically, to visual objects. For the better carrying on this remarkable analogy of the senses, we may here call sweetness the beautiful of the taste.

## SECTION XXIII.

### VARIATION, WHY BEAUTIFUL.

Another principal property of beautiful objects is, that the line of their parts is continually varying its direction; but it varies it by a very insensible deviation; it never varies it so quickly as to surprise, or by the sharpness of its angle to cause any twitching or convulsion of the optick nerve. Nothing long continued in the same manner, nothing very suddenly varied, can be beautiful; because both are opposite to that agreeable relaxation which is the characteristick effect of beauty. It is thus in all the senses. A motion in a right line, is that manner of moving next

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to a very gentle descent, in which we meet the least resistance; yet it is not that manner of moving, which, next to a descent, wearies us the least. Rest certainly tends to relax: yet there is a species of motion which relaxes more than rest; a gentle oscillatory motion, a rising and falling. Rocking sets children to sleep better than absolute rest; there is indeed scarce any thing at that age, which gives more pleasure than to be gently lifted up and down; the manner of playing which their nurses use with children, and the weighing and swinging used afterwards by themselves as a favourite amusement, evince this very sufficiently. Most people must have observed the sort of sense they have had on being swiftly drawn in an easy coach on a smooth turf, with gradual ascents and declivities. This will give a better idea of the beautiful, and point out its probable cause better, than almost any thing else. On the contrary, when one is hurried over a rough, rocky, broken road, the pain felt by these sudden inequalities shews why similar sights, feelings, and sounds, are so contrary to beauty: and with regard to the feeling, it is exactly the same in its effect, or very nearly the same, whether, for instance, I move my hand along the surface of a body of a certain shape, or whether such a body is moved along my hand. But to bring this analogy of the senses home to the eye: if a body presented to that sense has such a waving surface, that the rays of light reflected from it are in a continual insensible deviation from the strongest to the weakest (which is always the case in a surface gradually unequal), it must be exactly similar in its effects on the eye and touch; upon the one of which it operates directly, on the other indirectly. And this body will be beautiful if the lines which compose its surface are not continued, even so varied, in a manner that may weary or dissipate the attention. The variation itself must be continually varied.

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## SECTION XXIV.

### CONCERNING SMALLNESS.

To avoid a sameness which may arise from the too frequent repetition of the same reasonings, and of illustrations of the same nature, I will not enter very minutely into every particular that regards beauty, as it is founded on the disposition of its quantity, or its quantity itself. In speaking of the magnitude of bodies there is great uncertainty, because the ideas of great and small are terms almost entirely relative to the species of the objects, which are infinite. It is true, that having once fixed the species of any object, and the dimensions common in the individuals of that species, we may observe some that exceed, and some that fall short of, the ordinary standard: those which greatly exceed, are by that excess, provided the species itself be not very small, rather great and terrible than beautiful; but as in the animal world, and in a good measure in the vegetable world likewise, the qualities that constitute beauty may possibly be united to things of greater dimensions; when they are so united, they constitute a species something different both from the sublime and beautiful, which I have before called *fine;* but this kind, I imagine, has not such a power on the passions, either as vast bodies have which are endued with the correspondent qualities of the sublime; or as the qualities of beauty have when united in a small object. The affection produced by large bodies adorned with the spoils of beauty, is a tension continually relieved; which approaches to the nature of mediocrity. But if I were to say how I find myself affected upon such occasions, I should say, that the sublime suffers less by being united to some of the qualities of beauty, than beauty does by being joined to greatness of quantity, or any other properties of the sublime. There is something so overruling in whatever inspires us with awe, in all things which belong ever so remotely to terrour, that nothing else can stand in their presence. There lie the qualities of beauty either dead or unoperative;



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or at most exerted to mollify the rigour and sternness of the terrour, which is the natural concomitant of greatness. Besides the extraordinary great in every species, the opposite to this, the dwarfish and diminutive ought to be considered. Littleness, merely as such, has nothing contrary to the idea of beauty. The humming-bird, both in shape and colouring, yields to none of the winged species, of which it is the least; and perhaps his beauty is enhanced by his smallness. But there are animals, which when they are extremely small are rarely (if ever) beautiful. There is a dwarfish size of men and women, which is almost constantly so gross and massive in comparison of their height, that they present us with a very disagreeable image. But should a man be found not above two or three feet high, supposing such a person to have all the parts of his body of a delicacy suitable to such a size, and otherwise endued with the common qualities of other beautiful bodies, I am pretty well convinced that a person of such a stature might be considered as beautiful; might be the object of love; might give us very pleasing ideas on viewing him. The only thing which could possibly interpose to check our pleasure is, that such creatures, however formed, are unusual, and are often therefore considered as something monstrous. The large and gigantick, though very compatible with the sublime, is contrary to the beautiful. It is impossible to suppose a giant the object of love. When we let our imagination loose in romance, the ideas we naturally annex to that size are those of tyranny, cruelty, injustice, and every thing horrid and abominable. We paint the giant ravaging the country, plundering the innocent traveller, and afterwards gorged with his half-living flesh: such are Polyphemus, Cacus, and others, who make so great a figure in romances and heroick poems. The event we attend to with the greatest satisfaction is their defeat and death. I do not remember, in all that multitude of deaths with which the Iliad is filled, that the fall of any man, remarkable for his great stature and strength, touches us with pity; nor does it appear that the author, so well read in human nature, ever intended it should. It is Simoisius, in the soft bloom of

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youth, torn from his parents, who tremble for a courage so ill suited to his strength; it is another hurried by war from the new embraces of his bride, young, and fair, and a novice to the field, who melts us by his untimely fate. Achilles, in spite of the many qualities of beauty, which Homer has bestowed on his outward form, and the many great virtues with which he has adorned his mind, can never make us love him. It may be observed, that Homer has given the Trojans, whose fate he has designed to excite our compassion, infinitely more of the amiable social virtues than he has distributed among his Greeks. With regard to the Trojans, the passion he chooses to raise is pity; pity is a passion founded on love; and these *lesser*, and if I may say domestick virtues, are certainly the most amiable. But he has made the Greeks far their superiors in the politick and military virtues. The councils of Priam are weak; the arms of Hector comparatively feeble; his courage far below that of Achilles. Yet we love Priam more than Agamemnon, and Hector more than his conqueror Achilles. Admiration is the passion which Homer would excite in favour of the Greeks, and he has done it by bestowing on them the virtues which have but little to do with love. This short digression is perhaps not wholly beside our purpose, where our business is to shew, that objects of great dimensions are incompatible with beauty, the more incompatible as they are greater; whereas the small, if ever they fail of beauty, this failure is not to be attributed to their size.

## SECTION XXV.

### OF COLOUR.

With regard to colour, the disquisition is almost infinite; but I conceive the principles laid down in the beginning of this part are sufficient to account for the effects of them all, as well as for the agreeable effects of transparent bodies, whether fluid or solid. Suppose I look at a bottle of muddy liquor, of a blue or red colour: the blue or red rays cannot pass clearly to the eye, but are suddenly and unequally

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stopped by the intervention of little opaque bodies, which without preparation change the idea, and change it too into one disagreeable in its own nature, conformable to the principles laid down in sect. 24. But when the ray passes without such opposition through the glass or liquor, when the glass or liquor are quite transparent, the light is sometimes softened in the passage, which makes it more agreeable even as light; and the liquor reflecting all the rays of its proper colour *evenly*, it has such an effect on the eye, as smooth opaque bodies have on the eye and touch. So that the pleasure here is compounded of the softness of the transmitted and the evenness of the reflected light. This pleasure may be heightened by the common principles in other things, if the shape of the glass which holds the transparent liquor be so judiciously varied, as to present the colour gradually and interchangeably, weakened and strengthened with all the variety which judgment in affairs of this nature shall suggest. On a review of all that has been said of the effects, as well as the causes of both, it will appear, that the sublime and beautiful are built on principles very different, and that their affections are as different: the great has terrour for its basis; which, when it is modified, causes that emotion in the mind, which I have called astonishment; the beautiful is founded on mere positive pleasure, and excites in the soul that feeling, which is called love. Their causes have made the subject of this fourth part.

THE END OF THE FOURTH PART.

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# A PHILOSOPHICAL INQUIRY

## INTO THE ORIGIN OF OUR IDEAS OF THE SUBLIME AND BEAUTIFUL.

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## PART V.

### SECTION I.—OF WORDS.

NATURAL objects affect us, by the laws of that connexion which Providence has established between certain motions and configurations of bodies, and certain consequent feelings in our mind. Painting affects in the same manner, but with the superadded pleasure of imitation. Architecture affects by the laws of nature, and the law of reason; from which latter result the rules of proportion, which make a work to be praised or censured, in the whole or in some part, when the end for which it was designed is or is not properly answered. But as to words; they seem to me to affect us in a manner very different from that in which we are affected by natural objects, or by painting or architecture; yet words have as considerable a share in exciting ideas of beauty and of the sublime as any of those, and sometimes a much greater than any of them; therefore an inquiry into the manner by which they excite such emotions, is far from being unnecessary in a discourse of this kind.

### SECTION II.

#### THE COMMON EFFECT OF POETRY, NOT BY RAISING IDEAS OF THINGS.

THE common notion of the power of poetry and eloquence, as well as that of words in ordinary conversation,

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is, that they affect the mind by raising in it ideas of those things for which custom has appointed them to stand. To examine the truth of this notion, it may be requisite to observe that words may be divided into three sorts. The first are such as represent many simple ideas *united by nature* to form some one determinate composition, as man, horse, tree, castle, &c. These I call *aggregate words.* The second, are they that stand for one simple idea of such compositions, and no more; as red, blue, round, square, and the like. These I call *simple abstract* words. The third, are those, which are formed by an union, an *arbitrary* union of both the others, and of the various relations between them in greater or lesser degrees of complexity; as virtue, honour, persuasion, magistrate, and the like. These I call *compound abstract* words. Words, I am sensible, are capable of being classed into more curious distinctions; but these seem to be natural, and enough for our purpose; and they are disposed in that order in which they are commonly taught, and in which the mind gets the ideas they are substituted for. I shall begin with the third sort of words; compound abstracts, such as virtue, honour, persuasion, docility. Of these I am convinced, that whatever power they may have on the passions, they do not derive it from any representation raised in the mind of the things for which they stand. As compositions, they are not real essences, and hardly cause, I think, any real ideas. Nobody, I believe, immediately on hearing the sounds, virtue, liberty, or honour, conceives any precise notions of the particular modes of action and thinking, together with the mixt and simple ideas, and the several relations of them for which these words are substituted; neither has he any general idea, compounded of them; for if he had, then some of those particular ones, though indistinct perhaps, and confused, might come soon to be perceived. But this, I take it, is hardly ever the case. For, put yourself upon analysing one of these words, and you must reduce it from one set of general words to another, and then into the simple abstracts and aggregates, in a much longer series than may be at first imagined, before any real idea emerges to light, before you come to

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discover any thing like the first principles of such compositions; and when you have made such a discovery of the original ideas, the effect of the composition is utterly lost. A train of thinking of this sort, is much too long to be pursued in the ordinary ways of conversation, nor is it at all necessary that it should. Such words are in reality but mere sounds; but they are sounds which being used on particular occasions, wherein we receive some good, or suffer some evil; or see others affected with good or evil; or which we hear applied to other interesting things or events; and being applied in such a variety of cases, that we know readily by habit to what things they belong, they produce in the mind, whenever they are afterwards mentioned, effects similar to those of their occasions. The sounds being often used without reference to any particular occasion, and carrying still their first impressions, they at last utterly lose their connexion with the particular occasions that gave rise to them; yet the sound, without any annexed notion, continues to operate as before.

## SECTION III.

### GENERAL WORDS BEFORE IDEAS.

Mr. Locke has somewhere observed, with his usual sagacity, that most general words, those belonging to virtue and vice, good and evil, especially, are taught before the particular modes of action to which they belong are presented to the mind; and with them, the love of the one, and the abhorrence of the other; for the minds of children are so ductile, that a nurse, or any person about a child, by seeming pleased or displeased with any thing, or even any word, may give the disposition of the child a similar turn. When afterwards, the several occurrences in life come to be applied to these words, and that which is pleasant often appears under the name of evil; and what is disagreeable to nature is called good and virtuous; a strange confusion of ideas and affections arises in the minds of many; and an appearance of no small contradiction between their notions

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and their actions. There are many who love virtue and who detest vice, and this not from hypocrisy or affectation, who notwithstanding very frequently act ill, and wickedly in particulars without the least remorse; because these particular occasions never came into view, when the passions on the side of virtue were so warmly affected by certain words heated originally by the breath of others; and for this reason, it is hard to repeat certain sets of words, though owned by themselves unoperative, without being in some degree affected, especially if a warm and affecting tone of voice accompanies them, as suppose,

Wise, valiant, generous, good, and great.

These words, by having no application, ought to be unoperative; but when words commonly sacred to great occasions are used, we are affected by them even without the occasions. When words which have been generally so applied are put together without any rational view, or in such a manner that they do not rightly agree with each other, the style is called bombast. And it requires in several cases much good sense and experience to be guarded against the force of such language; for when propriety is neglected, a greater number of these affecting words may be taken into the service, and a greater variety may be indulged in combining them.

## SECTION IV.

### THE EFFECT OF WORDS.

If words have all their possible extent of power, three effects arise in the mind of the hearer. The first is, the *sound;* the second, the *picture*, or representation of the thing signified by the sound; the third is, the *affection* of the soul produced by one or by both of the foregoing. *Compounded abstract* words, of which we have been speaking, (honour, justice, liberty, and the like) produce the first and the last of these effects, but not the second. *Simple abstracts*, are used to signify some one simple idea without

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much adverting to others which may chance to attend it, as blue, green, hot, cold, and the like; these are capable of affecting all three of the purposes of words; as the *aggregate* words, man, castle, horse, &c. are in a yet higher degree. But I am of opinion, that the most general effect even of these words, does not arise from their forming pictures of the several things they would represent in the imagination; because, on a very diligent examination of my own mind, and getting others to consider theirs, I do not find that once in twenty times any such picture is formed, and when it is, there is most commonly a particular effort of the imagination for that purpose. But the aggregate words operate, as I said of the compound-abstracts, not by presenting any image to the mind, but by having from use the same effect on being mentioned, that their original has when it is seen. Suppose we were to read a passage to this effect: "The river Danube rises in a moist and mountainous soil in the heart of Germany, where winding to and fro, it waters several principalities, until, turning into Austria, and leaving the walls of Vienna, it passes into Hungary; there with a vast flood, augmented by the Saave and the Drave, it quits Christendom, and rolling through the barbarous countries which border on Tartary, it enters by many mouths in the Black sea." In this description many things are mentioned, as mountains, rivers, cities, the sea, &c. But let any body examine himself, and see whether he has had impressed on his imagination any pictures of a river, mountain, watery soil, Germany, &c. Indeed it is impossible, in the rapidity and quick succession of words in conversation, to have ideas both of the sound of the word, and of the thing represented; besides, some words, expressing real essences, are so mixed with others of a general and nominal import, that it is impracticable to jump from sense to thought, from particulars to generals, from things to words, in such a manner as to answer the purposes of life; nor is it necessary that we should.



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## SECTION V.

### EXAMPLES THAT WORDS MAY AFFECT WITHOUT RAISING IMAGES.

I FIND it very hard to persuade several that their passions are affected by words from whence they have no ideas; and yet harder to convince them, that in the ordinary course of conversation we are sufficiently understood without raising any images of the things concerning which we speak. It seems to be an odd subject of dispute with any man, whether he has ideas in his mind or not. Of this, at first view, every man in his own forum, ought to judge without appeal. But, strange as it may appear, we are often at a loss to know what ideas we have of things, or whether we have any ideas at all upon some subjects. It even requires a good deal of attention to be thoroughly satisfied on this head. Since I wrote these papers, I found two very striking instances of the possibility there is, that a man may hear words without having any idea of the things which they represent, and yet afterwards be capable of returning them to others, combined in a new way, and with great propriety, energy, and instruction. The first instance is that of Mr. Blacklock, a poet blind from his birth. Few men blessed with the most perfect sight can describe visual objects with more spirit and justness than this blind man; which cannot possibly be attributed to his having a clearer conception of the things he describes than is common to other persons. Mr. Spence, in an elegant preface which he has written to the works of this poet, reasons very ingeniously, and, I imagine, for the most part, very rightly, upon the cause of this extraordinary phænomenon; but I cannot altogether agree with him, that some improprieties in language and thought, which occur in these poems, have arisen from the blind poet's imperfect conception of visual objects, since such improprieties, and much greater, may be found in writers even of an higher class than Mr. Blacklock, and who notwithstanding possessed the faculty of seeing in its full perfection. Here

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is a poet doubtless as much affected by his own descriptions, as any that reads them can be; and yet he is affected with this strong enthusiasm by things of which he neither has, nor can possibly have any idea further than that of a bare sound: and why may not those who read his works be affected in the same manner that he was; with as little of any real ideas of the things described? The second instance is of Mr. Saunderson, professor of mathematics in the university of Cambridge. This learned man had acquired great knowledge in natural philosophy, in astronomy, and whatever sciences depend upon mathematical skill. What was the most extraordinary and the most to my purpose, he gave exeellent lectures upon light and colours; and this man taught others the theory of those ideas which they had, and which he himself undoubtedly had not. But it is probable that the words red, blue, green, answered to him as well as the ideas of the colours themselves; for the ideas of greater or lesser degrees of refrangibility being applied to these words, and the blind man being instructed in what other respects they were found to agree or to disagree, it was as easy for him to reason upon the words, as if he had been fully master of the ideas. Indeed it must be owned he could make no new discoveries in the way of experiment. He did nothing but what we do every day in common discourse. When I wrote this last sentence, and used the words *every day* and *common discourse*, I had no images in my mind of any succession of time; nor of men in conference with each other; nor do I imagine that the reader will have any such ideas on reading it. Neither when I spoke of red, or blue and green, as well as refrangibility, had I these several colours, or the rays of light passing into a different medium, and there diverted from their course, painted before me in the way of images. I know very well that the mind possesses a faculty of raising such images at pleasure; but then an act of the will is necessary to this; and in ordinary conversation or reading it is very rarely that any image at all is excited in the mind. If I say "I shall go to Italy next summer," I am well understood. Yet I believe nobody has by this

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painted in his imagination the exact figure of the speaker passing by land or by water, or both; sometimes on horseback, sometimes in a carriage; with all the particulars of the journey. Still less has he any idea of Italy the country to which I proposed to go; or of the greenness of the fields, the ripening of the fruits, and the warmth of the air, with the change to this from a different season, which are the ideas for which the word *summer* is substituted; but least of all has he any image from the word *next;* for this word stands for the idea of many summers, with the exclusion of all but one: and surely the man who says *next summer*, has no images of such a succession, and such an exclusion. In short it is not only of those ideas which are commonly called abstract, and of which no image at all can be formed, but even of particular real beings, that we converse without having any idea of them excited in the imagination; as will certainly appear on a diligent examination of our own minds. Indeed, so little does poetry depend for its effect on the power of raising sensible images, that I am convinced it would lose a very considerable part of its energy if this were the necessary result of all description. Because that union of affecting words, which is the most powerful of all poetical instruments, would frequently lose its force along with its propriety and consistency, if the sensible images were always excited. There is not perhaps in the whole Eneid a more grand and laboured passage than the description of Vulcan's cavern in Etna, and the works that are there carried on. Virgil dwells particularly on the formation of the thunder, which he describes unfinished under the hammers of the Cyclops. But what are the principles of this extraordinary composition?

> Tres imbris torti radios, tres nubis aquosæ
> Addiderant; rutili tres ignis et alitis austri:
> Fulgores nunc terrificos, sonitumque, metumque
> Miscebant operi, flammisque sequacibus iras.

This seems to me admirably sublime; yet if we attend coolly to the kind of sensible images which a combination of ideas

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of this sort must form, the chimeras of madmen cannot appear more wild and absurd than such a picture. "*Three rays of twisted showers, three of watery clouds, three of fire, and three of the winged south wind; then mixed they in the work terrifick lightnings, and sound and fear, and anger, with pursuing flames.*" This strange composition is formed into a gross body; it is hammered by the Cyclops, it is in part polished, and partly continues rough. The truth is, if poetry gives us a noble assemblage of words corresponding to many noble ideas, which are connected by circumstances of time or place, or related to each other as cause and effect, or associated in any natural way, they may be moulded together in any form, and perfectly answer their end. The picturesque connexion is not demanded; because no real picture is formed; nor is the effect of the description at all the less upon this account. What is said of Helen by Priam and the old men of his council, is generally thought to give us the highest possible idea of that fatal beauty.

Ου νεμεσις Τρωας και ευκνημιδας Αχαιους,
Τοιη δ' αμφι γυναικι πολυν χρονον αλγεα πασχειν·
Αινως δ' αθανατοισι θεης εις ωπα εοικεν.

They cry'd, no wonder such celestial charms
For nine long years have set the world in arms;
What winning graces! what majestick mien!
She moves a goddess, and she looks a queen.

POPE.

Here is not one word said of the particulars of her beauty; nothing which can in the least help us to any precise idea of her person; but yet we are much more touched by this manner of mentioning her than by those long and laboured descriptions of Helen, whether handed down by tradition, or formed by fancy, which are to be met with in some authors. I am sure it affects me much more than the minute description which Spenser has given of Belphebe; though I own that there are parts in that description, as there are in all the descriptions of that excellent writer, extremely fine

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and poetical. The terrible picture which Lucretius has drawn of religion, in order to display the magnanimity of his philosophical hero in opposing her, is thought to be designed with great boldness and spirit:

> Humana ante oculos fœde cum vita jaceret,
> In terris, oppressa gravi sub religione,
> Quæ caput e cœli regionibus ostendebat
> Horribili super aspectu mortalibus instans;
> Primus Graius homo mortales tollere contra
> Est oculos ausus.———

What idea do you derive from so excellent a picture? none at all, most certainly; neither has the poet said a single word which might in the least serve to mark a single limb or feature of the phantom, which he intended to represent in all the horrours imagination can conceive. In reality poetry and rhetorick do not succeed in exact description so well as painting does; their business is, to affect rather by sympathy than imitation; to display rather the effect of things on the mind of the speaker, or of others, than to present a clear idea of the things themselves. This is their most extensive province, and that in which they succeed the best.

## SECTION VI.

### POETRY NOT STRICTLY AN IMITATIVE ART.

Hence we may observe that poetry, taken in its most general sense, cannot with strict propriety be called an art of imitation. It is indeed an imitation so far as it describes the manners and passions of men which their words can express; where *animi motus effert interprete lingua.* There it is strictly imitation; and all merely *dramatick* poetry is of this sort. But *descriptive* poetry operates chiefly by *substitution;* by means of sounds, which by custom have the effect of realities. Nothing is an imitation further than as it resembles some other thing; and words undoubtedly have no sort of resemblance to the ideas for which they stand.

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## SECTION VII.

### HOW WORDS INFLUENCE THE PASSIONS.

Now, as words affect, not by any original power, but by representation, it might be supposed, that their influence over the passions should be but light; yet it is quite otherwise; for we find by experience, that eloquence and poetry are as capable, nay indeed much more capable, of making deep and lively impressions than any other arts, and even than nature itself in very many cases. And this arises chiefly from these three causes. First, that we take an extraordinary part in the passions of others, and that we are easily affected and brought into sympathy by any tokens which are shewn of them; and there are no tokens which can express all the circumstances of most passions so fully as words; so that if a person speaks upon any subject, he can not only convey the subject to you, but likewise the manner in which he is himself affected by it. Certain it is, that the influence of most things on our passions is not so much from the things themselves, as from our opinions concerning them; and these again depend very much on the opinions of other men, conveyable for the most part by words only. Secondly, there are many things of a very affecting nature, which can seldom occur in the reality, but the words which represent them often do; and thus they have an opportunity of making a deep impression and taking root in the mind, whilst the idea of the reality was transient; and to some perhaps never really occurred in any shape, to whom it is notwithstanding very affecting, as war, death, famine, &c. Besides many ideas have never been at all presented to the senses of any men but by words, as God, angels, devils, heaven, and hell, all of which have however a great influence over the passions. Thirdly, by words we have it in our power to make such *combinations* as we cannot possibly do otherwise. By this power of combining we are able, by the addition of well chosen circumstances, to give a new life and force to the simple object. In painting we may represent any fine fig-

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ure we please; but we never can give it those enlivening touches which it may receive from words. To represent an angel in a picture, you can only draw a beautiful young man winged: but what painting can furnish out any thing so grand as the addition of one word, "the angel of the *Lord*"? It is true, I have here no clear idea; but these words affect the mind more than the sensible image did; which is all I contend for. A picture of Priam dragged to the altar's foot, and there murdered, if it were well executed, would undoubtedly be very moving; but there are very aggravating circumstances, which it could never represent:

Sanguine fœdantem *quos ipse sacraverat* ignes.

As a further instance, let us consider those lines of Milton, where he describes the travels of the fallen angels through their dismal habitation:

———O'er many a dark and dreary vale
They pass'd, and many a region dolorous;
O'er many a frozen, many a fiery Alp;
Rocks, caves, lakes, fens, bogs, dens, and shades of death,
A universe of death.———

Here is displayed the force of union in

Rocks, caves, lakes, dens, bogs, fens, and shades;

which yet would lose the greatest part of their effect, ifthey were not the

Rocks, caves, lakes, dens, bogs, fens, and shades—
———of *Death.*

This idea or this affection caused by a word, which nothing but a word could annex to the others, raises a very great degree of the sublime; and this sublime is raised yet higher by what follows, a "*universe of Death.*" Here are again two ideas not presentable but by language; and an union of them great and amazing beyond conception; if they may properly be called ideas which present no distinct image to the mind:—but still it will be difficult to conceive how

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words can move the passions which belong to real objects, without representing these objects clearly. This is difficult to us, because we do not sufficiently distinguish, in our observations upon language, between a clear expression, and a strong expression. These are frequently confounded with each other, though they are in reality extremely different. The former regards the understanding; the latter belongs to the passions. The one describes a thing as it is; the latter describes it as it is felt. Now, as there is a moving tone of voice, an impassioned countenance, an agitated gesture, which affect independently of the things about which they are exerted, so there are words, and certain dispositions of words, which being peculiarly devoted to passionate subjects, and always used by those who are under the influence of any passion, touch and move us more than those which far more clearly and distinctly express the subject matter. We yield to sympathy what we refuse to description. The truth is, all verbal description, merely as naked description, though never so exact, conveys so poor and insufficient an idea of the thing described, that it could scarcely have the smallest effect, if the speaker did not call in to his aid those modes of speech that mark a strong and lively feeling in himself. Then, by the contagion of our passions, we catch a fire already kindled in another, which probably might never have been struck out by the object described. Words, by strongly conveying the passions, by those means which we have already mentioned, fully compensate for their weakness in other respects. It may be observed, that very polished languages, and such as are praised for their superiour clearness and perspicuity, are generally deficient in strength. The French language has that perfection and that defect. Whereas the oriental tongues, and in general the languages of most unpolished people, have a great force and energy of expression; and this is but natural. Uncultivated people are but ordinary observers of things, and not critical in distinguishing them; but, for that reason, they admire more, and are more affected with what they see, and therefore express themselves in a warmer and more passionate manner. If the affection be



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well conveyed, it will work its effect without any clear idea; often without any idea at all of the thing which has originally given rise to it.

It might be expected from the fertility of the subject, that I should consider poetry as it regards the sublime and beautiful, more at large; but it must be observed that in this light it has been often and well handled already. It was not my design to enter into the criticism of the sublime and beautiful in any art, but to attempt to lay down such principles as may tend to ascertain, to distinguish, and to form a sort of standard for them; which purposes I thought might be best effected by an inquiry into the properties of such things in nature, as raise love and astonishment in us; and by shewing in what manner they operated to produce these passions. Words were only so far to be considered, as to shew upon what principle they were capable of being the representatives of these natural things, and by what powers they were able to affect us often as strongly as the things they represent, and sometimes much more strongly.

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# A SHORT ACCOUNT

## OF A LATE SHORT ADMINISTRATION.

1766.

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THE late administration came into employment, under the mediation of the Duke of Cumberland, on the tenth day of July 1765; and was removed, upon a plan settled by the Earl of Chatham, on the thirtieth day of July 1766, having lasted just one year and twenty days.

In that space of time

The distractions of the British empire were composed, by *the repeal of the American stamp act;*

But the constitutional superiority of Great Britain was preserved, by *the act for securing the dependence of the colonies.*

*Private* houses were relieved from the jurisdiction of the excise, by *the repeal of the cyder-tax.*

The personal liberty of the subject was confirmed, by *the resolution against general warrants.*

The lawful secrets of business and friendship were rendered inviolable, by *the resolution for condemning the seizure of papers.*

The trade of America was set free from injudicious and ruinous impositions—its revenue was improved, and settled upon a rational foundation—its commerce extended with foreign countries; while all the advantages were secured to Great Britain, *by the act for repealing certain duties, and encouraging, regulating, and securing the trade of this kingdom, and the British dominions in America.*

Materials were provided and insured to our manufactures—the sale of these manufactures was increased—the African trade preserved and extended—the principles of the act of navigation pursued, and the plan improved—and the

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trade for bullion rendered free, secure, and permanent, by *the act for opening certain ports in Dominica and Jamaica.*

That administration was the first which proposed and encouraged publick meetings and free consultations of merchants from all parts of the kingdom; by which means the truest lights have been received; great benefits have been already derived to manufactures and commerce; and the most extensive prospects are opened for further improvement.

Under them, the interests of our northern and southern colonies, before that time jarring and dissonant, were understood, compared, adjusted, and perfectly reconciled. The passions and animosities of the colonies, by judicious and lenient measures, were allayed and composed, and the foundation laid for a lasting agreement amongst them.

Whilst that administration provided for the liberty and commerce of their country, as the true basis of its power, they consulted its interests, they asserted its honour abroad, with temper and with firmness; by making an advantageous treaty of commerce with Russia; by obtaining a liquidation of the Canada bills, to the satisfaction of the proprietors; by reviving and raising from its ashes the negociation for the Manilla ransom, which had been extinguished and abandoned by their predecessors.

They treated their sovereign with decency; with reverence. They discountenanced, and, it is hoped, forever abolished, the dangerous and unconstitutional practice of removing military officers for their votes in parliament. They firmly adhered to those friends of liberty, who had run all hazards in its cause, and provided for them in preference to every other claim.

With the Earl of Bute they had no personal connection; no correspondence of councils. They neither courted him nor persecuted him. They practised no corruption; nor were they even suspected of it. They sold no offices. They obtained no reversions or pensions, either coming in or going out, for themselves, their families, or their dependents.

In the prosecution of their measures they were traversed

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by an opposition of a new and singular character; an opposition of place-men and pensioners. They were supported by the confidence of the nation. And having held their offices under many difficulties and discouragements, they left them at the express command, as they had accepted them at the earnest request, of their royal master.

These are plain facts; of a clear and publick nature; neither extended by elaborate reasoning, nor heightened by the colouring of eloquence. They are the services of a single year.

The removal of that administration from power, is not to them premature; since they were in office long enough to accomplish many plans of public utility; and, by their perseverance and resolution, rendered the way smooth and easy to their successors; having left their king and their country in a much better condition than they found them. By the temper they manifest, they seem to have now no other wish, than that their successors may do the publick as real and as faithful service as they have done.

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# OBSERVATIONS

## ON A LATE PUBLICATION, INTITULED, "THE PRESENT STATE OF THE NATION."

" O Tite, si quid ego adjuvero curamve levasso,
" Quæ nunc te coquit, et versat sub pectore fixa,
" Ecquid erit pretii?" ENN. ap. CIC.

1769.

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PARTY divisions, whether on the whole operating for good or evil, are things inseparable from free government. This is a truth which, I believe, admits little dispute, having been established by the uniform experience of all ages. The part a good citizen ought to take in these divisions, has been a matter of much deeper controversy. But God forbid, that any controversy relating to our essential morals should admit of no decision. It appears to me, that this question, like most of the others which regard our duties in life, is to be determined by our station in it. Private men may be wholly neutral, and entirely innocent; but they who are legally invested with publick trust, or stand on the high ground of rank and dignity, which is trust implied, can hardly in any case remain indifferent, without the certainty of sinking into insignificance; and thereby in effect deserting that post in which, with the fullest authority, and for the wisest purposes, the laws and institutions of their country have fixed them. However, if it be the office of those who are thus circumstanced, to take a decided part, it is no less their duty that it should be a sober one. It ought to be circumscribed by the same laws of decorum, and balanced by the same temper, which bound and regulate all the virtues. In a word, we ought to act in party with all the moderation which does not absolutely enervate that vigour, and

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quench that fervency of spirit, without which the best wishes for the publick good must evaporate in empty speculation.

It is probably from some such motives that the friends of a very respectable party in this kingdom have been hitherto silent. For these two years past, from one and the same quarter of politicks, a continual fire has been kept upon them; sometimes from the unwieldy column of quartos and octavos; sometimes from the light squadrons of occasional pamphlets and flying sheets. Every month has brought on its periodical calumny. The abuse has taken every shape which the ability of the writers could give it; plain invective, clumsy raillery, misrepresented anecdote.* No method of vilifying the measures, the abilities, the intentions, or the persons which compose that body, has been omitted.

On their part nothing was opposed but patience and character. It was a matter of the most serious and indignant affliction to persons, who thought themselves in conscience bound to oppose a ministry, dangerous from its very constitution, as well as its measures, to find themselves, whenever they faced their adversaries, continually attacked on the rear by a set of men who pretended to be actuated by motives similar to theirs. They saw that the plan long pursued with but too fatal a success, was to break the strength of this kingdom; by frittering down the bodies which compose it; by fomenting bitter and sanguinary animosities, and by dissolving every tie of social affection and publick trust. These virtuous men, such I am warranted by public opinion to call them, were resolved rather to endure every thing, than co-operate in that design. A diversity of opinion upon almost every principle of politicks had indeed drawn a strong line of separation between them and some others. However, they were desirous not to extend the misfortune by unnecessary bitterness; they wished to prevent a difference of opinion on the commonwealth from festering into rancorous and incurable hostility. Accordingly they endeavoured that all

* History of the Minority. History of the Repeal of the Stamp-Act. Considerations on Trade and Finance. Political Register, &c. &c.

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past controversies should be forgotten; and that enough for the day should be the evil thereof. There is however a limit at which forbearance ceases to be a virtue. Men may tolerate injuries, whilst they are only personal to themselves. But it is not the first of virtues to bear with moderation the indignities that are offered to our country. A piece has at length appeared, from the quarter of all the former attacks, which upon every publick consideration demands an answer. Whilst persons more equal to this business may be engaged in affairs of greater moment, I hope I shall be excused, if, in a few hours of a time not very important, and from such materials as I have by me (more than enough however for this purpose), I undertake to set the facts and arguments of this wonderful performance in a proper light. I will endeavour to state what this piece is; the purpose for which I take it to have been written; and the effects (supposing it should have any effect at all) it must necessarily produce.

This piece is called, *The present State of the Nation.* It may be considered as a sort of digest of the avowed maxims of a certain political school, the effects of whose doctrines and practices this country will feel long and severely. It is made up of a farrago of almost every topick which has been agitated in parliamentary debate, or private conversation, on national affairs for these last seven years. The oldest controversies are hauled out of the dust with which time and neglect had covered them. Arguments ten times repeated, a thousand times answered before, are here repeated again. Publick accounts formerly printed and re-printed revolve once more, and find their old station in this sober meridian. All the common-place lamentations upon the decay of trade, the increase of taxes, and the high price of labour and provisions, are here retailed again and again in the same tone with which they have drawled through columns of Gazetteers and Advertisers for a century together. Paradoxes which affront common sense, and uninteresting barren truths which generate no conclusion, are thrown in to augment unwieldly bulk, without adding any thing to weight. Because two accusations are better than one, contradictions are set staring one another in the face, without even an attempt to recon-

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cile them. And to give the whole a sort of portentous air of labour and information, the table of the house of commons is swept into this grand reservoir of politicks.

As to the composition, it bears a striking and whimsical resemblance to a funeral sermon, not only in the pathetick prayer with which it concludes, but in the style and tenour of the whole performance. It is piteously doleful, nodding every now and then towards dulness; well stored with pious frauds, and, like most discourses of the sort, much better calculated for the private advantage of the preacher than the edification of the hearers.

The author has indeed so involved his subject, that it is frequently far from being easy to comprehend his meaning. It is happy for the publick that it is never difficult to fathom his design. The apparent intention of this author is to draw the most aggravated, hideous, and deformed picture of the state of this country, which his querulous eloquence, aided by the arbitrary dominion he assumes over fact, is capable of exhibiting. Had he attributed our misfortunes to their true cause, the injudicious tampering of bold, improvident, and visionary ministers at one period, or to their supine negligence and traitorous dissensions at another, the complaint had been just, and might have been useful. But far the greater and much the worst part of the state which he exhibits is owing, according to his representation, not to accidental and extrinsick mischiefs attendant on the nation, but to its radical weakness and constitutional distempers. All this however is not without purpose. The author is in hopes, that, when we are fallen into a fanatical terrour for the national salvation, we shall then be ready to throw ourselves, in a sort of precipitate trust, some strange disposition of the mind jumbled up of presumption and despair, into the hands of the most pretending and forward undertaker. One such undertaker at least he has in readiness for our service. But let me assure this generous person, that however he may succeed in exciting our fears for the publick danger, he will find it hard indeed to engage us to place any confidence in the system he proposes for our security.

His undertaking is great. The purpose of this pamphlet,



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and at which it aims directly or obliquely in every page, is to persuade the publick of three or four of the most difficult points in the world—that all the advantages of the late war were on the part of the Bourbon alliance; that the peace of Paris perfectly consulted the dignity and interest of this country; and that the American stamp-act was a master-piece of policy and finance; that the only good minister this nation has enjoyed since his majesty's accession, is the Earl of Bute; and the only good managers of revenue we have seen are Lord Despenser and Mr. George Grenville; and under the description of men of virtue and ability, he holds them out to us as the only persons fit to put our affairs in order. Let not the reader mistake me: he does not actually name these persons; but, having highly applauded their conduct in all its parts, and heavily censured every other set of men in the kingdom, he then recommends us to his men of virtue and ability.

Such is the author's scheme. Whether it will answer his purpose, I know not. But surely that purpose ought to be a wonderfully good one, to warrant the methods he has taken to compass it. If the facts and reasonings in this piece are admitted, it is all over with us. The continuance of our tranquillity depends upon the compassion of our rivals. Unable to secure to ourselves the advantages of peace, we are at the same time utterly unfit for war. It is impossible, if this state of things be credited abroad, that we can have any alliance; all nations will fly from so dangerous a connexion, lest, instead of being partakers of our strength, they should only become sharers in our ruin. If it is believed at home, all that firmness of mind, and dignified national courage, which used to be the great support of this isle against the powers of the world, must melt away, and fail within us.

In such a state of things can it be amiss, if I aim at holding out some comfort to the nation; another sort of comfort indeed, than that which this writer provides for it; a comfort, not from its physician, but from its constitution; if I attempt to shew that all the arguments upon which he founds the decay of that constitution, and the necessity of

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that physician, are vain and frivolous? I will follow the author closely in his own long career, through the war, the peace, the finances, our trade, and our foreign politicks: not for the sake of the particular measures which he discusses; that can be of no use; they are all decided; their good is all enjoyed, or their evil incurred: but for the sake of the principles of war, peace, trade, and finances. These principles are of infinite moment. They must come again and again under consideration; and it imports the publick, of all things, that those of its ministers be enlarged, and just, and well confirmed, upon all these subjects. What notions this author entertains, we shall see presently; notions in my opinion very irrational, and extremely dangerous; and which, if they should crawl from pamphlets into counsels, and be realised from private speculation into national measures, cannot fail of hastening and completing our ruin.

This author, after having paid his compliment to the shewy appearances of the late war in our favour, is in the utmost haste to tell you that these appearances were *fallacious*, that they were no more than an *imposition*.—I fear I must trouble the reader with a pretty long quotation, in order to set before him the more clearly this author's peculiar way of conceiving and reasoning:

"Happily (the K.) was then advised by ministers, who did not suffer themselves to be dazzled by the glare of brilliant appearances; but, knowing them to be *fallacious*, they wisely resolved to profit of their splendour before our enemies should also *discover the imposition*.—The increase in the exports was found to have been occasioned chiefly by the demands of *our own fleets and armies*, and, instead of bringing wealth to the nation, was to be paid for by oppressive taxes upon the people of England. While the British seamen were consuming on board our men of war and privateers, foreign ships and foreign seamen were employed in the transportation of our merchandize; and the carrying trade, so great a source of wealth and marine, *was entirely engrossed by the neutral nations*. The number of British ships annually arriving in our ports was reduced 1756 sail, containing 92,559 tons, on a medium of the six years war, compared with the

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six years of peace preceding it.—The conquest of the Havannah had, indeed, stopped the remittance of specie from Mexico to Spain; but it had not enabled England to seize it: on the contrary, our merchants suffered by the detention of the galleons, as their *correspondents in Spain were disabled from paying them for their goods sent to America. The loss of the trade to old Spain was a farther bar to an influx of specie;* and the attempt upon Portugal had not only deprived us of an import of bullion from thence, but the payment of our troops employed in its defence was a fresh drain opened for the diminution of our circulating specie.—The high premiums given for new loans had sunk the price of the old stock near a third of its original value, so that the purchasers had an obligation from the state to re-pay them with an addition of 33 *per cent.* to their capital. Every new loan required new taxes to be imposed; new taxes must add to the price of our manufactures *and lessen their consumption among foreigners.* The decay of our trade must necessarily *occasion a decrease of the publick revenue;* and a deficiency of our funds must either be made up by fresh taxes, which would only add to the calamity, or our national credit must be destroyed, by shewing the publick creditors the inability of the nation to re-pay them their principal money.—Bounties had already been given for recruits which exceeded the year's wages of the ploughman and reaper; and as these were exhausted, and *husbandry stood still for want of hands*, the manufacturers were next to be tempted to quit the anvil and loom by higher offers.—*France, bankrupt France, had no such calamities impending over her; her distresses were great, but they were immediate and temporary; her want of credit preserved her from a great increase of debt, and the loss of her ultra-marine dominions lessened her expenses. Her colonies had, indeed, put themselves into the hands of the English; but the property of her subjects had been preserved by capitulations, and a way opened for making her those remittances, which the war had before suspended, with as much security as in the time of peace.*—Her armies in Germany had been hitherto prevented from seiz-

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ing upon Hanover; but they continued to encamp on the same ground on which the first battle was fought; and, as it must ever happen from the policy of that government, *the last troops she sent into the field were always found to be the best, and her frequent losses only served to fill her regiments with better soldiers. The conquest of Hanover became therefore every campaign more probable.* It is not to be noted, that the French troops received subsistence only, for the last three years of the war; and that, although large arrears were due to them at its conclusion, the charge was the less during its continuance."*

If any one be willing to see to how much greater lengths the author carries these ideas, he will recur to the book. This is sufficient for a specimen of his manner of thinking. I believe one reflection uniformly obtrudes itself upon every reader of these paragraphs. For what purpose in any cause shall we hereafter contend with France? can we ever flatter ourselves that we shall wage a more successful war? If, on our part, in a war the most prosperous we ever carried on, by sea and by land, and in every part of the globe, attended with the unparalleled circumstance of an immense increase of trade and augmentation of revenue; if a continued series of disappointments, disgraces, and defeats, followed by publick bankruptcy, on the part of France; if all these still leave her a gainer on the whole balance, will it not be downright phrenzy in us ever to look her in the face again, or to contend with her any, even the most essential points, since victory and defeat, though by different ways, equally conduct us to our ruin? Subjection to France without a struggle will indeed be less for our honour, but on every principle of our author it must be more for our advantage. According to his representation of things, the question is only concerning the most easy fall. France had not discovered, our statesman tells us, at the end of that war, the triumphs of defeat, and the resources which are derived from bankruptcy. For my poor part, I do not wonder at their blindness. But the English ministers saw further. Our author has at length let foreigners also into the secret, and made them altogether as

* P. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.

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wise as ourselves. It is their own fault if (*vulgato imperii arcano*) they are imposed upon any longer. They now are apprised of the sentiments which the great candidate for the government of this great empire entertains; and they will act accordingly. They are taught our weakness and their own advantages.

He tells the world,* that if France carries on the war against us in Germany, every loss she sustains contributes to the achievement of her conquest. If her armies are three years unpaid, she is the less exhausted by expense. If her credit is destroyed, she is the less oppressed with debt. If her troops are cut to pieces, they will by her policy (and a wonderful policy it is) be improved, and will be supplied with much better men. If the war is carried on in the colonies, he tells them that the loss of her ultramarine dominions lessens her expenses,† and ensures her remittances:

> Per damna, per cædes, ab ipsâ
> Ducit opes animumque ferro.

If so, what is it we can do to hurt her?—it will be all an *imposition*, all *fallacious*. Why the result must be—*Occidit, occidit spes omnis et fortuna nostri nominis.*

The only way which the author's principles leave for our escape, is to reverse our condition into that of France, and to take her losing cards into our hands. But though his principles drive him to it, his politicks will not suffer him to walk on this ground. Talking at our ease and of other countries, we may bear to be diverted with such speculations; but in England we shall never be taught to look upon the annihilation of our trade, the ruin of our credit, the defeat of our armies, and the loss of our ultramarine dominions (whatever the author may think of them), to be the high road to prosperity and greatness.

The reader does not, I hope, imagine that I mean seriously to set about the refutation of these uningenious paradoxes and reveries without imagination. I state them only that we may discern a little in the questions of war and peace, the most weighty of all questions, what is the wisdom of

* P. 9, 10. † P. 9.

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those men who are held out to us as the only hope of an expiring nation. The present ministry is indeed of a strange character: at once indolent and distracted. But if a ministerial system should be formed, actuated by such maxims as are avowed in this piece, the vices of the present ministry would become their virtues; their indolence would be the greatest of all publick benefits, and a distraction that entirely defeated every one of their schemes would be our only security from destruction.

To have stated these reasonings is enough, I presume, to do their business. But they are accompanied with facts and records, which may seem of a little more weight. I trust however that the facts of this author will be as far from bearing the touchstone, as his arguments. On a little enquiry, they will be found as great an imposition as the successes they are meant to depreciate; for they are all either false or fallaciously applied; or not in the least to the purpose for which they are produced.

First, the author, in order to support his favourite paradox, that our possession of the French colonies was of no detriment to France, has thought proper to inform us,* that "they put themselves into the hands of the English." He uses the same assertion, in nearly the same words, in another place;† "her colonies had put themselves into our hands." Now, in justice not only to fact and common sense, but to the incomparable valour and perseverance of our military and naval forces thus unhandsomely traduced, I must tell this author, that the French colonies did not "put themselves into the hands of the English." They were compelled to submit; they were subdued by dint of English valour. Will the five years war carried on in Canada, in which fell one of the principal hopes of this nation, and all the battles lost and gained during that anxious period, convince this author of his mistake? Let him inquire of Sir Jeffery Amherst, under whose conduct that war was carried on; of Sir Charles Saunders, whose steadiness and presence of mind saved our fleet, and were so eminently serviceable in the

* P. 9. † P. 6.

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whole course of the siege of Quebec; of general Monckton, who was shot through the body there, whether France "put her colonies into the hands of the English."

Though he has made no exception, yet I would be liberal to him; perhaps he means to confine himself to her colonies in the West Indies. But surely it will fare as ill with him there as in North America, whilst we remember that in our first attempt at Martinico we were actually defeated; that it was three months before we reduced Guadaloupe; and that the conquest of the Havannah was achieved by the highest conduct, aided by circumstances of the greatest good fortune. He knows the expense both of men and treasure at which we bought that place. However, if it had so pleased the peace-makers, it was no dear purchase; for it was decisive of the fortune of the war and the terms of the treaty: the duke of Nivernois thought so; France, England, Europe, considered it in that light; all the world, except the then friends of the then ministry, who wept for our victories, and were in haste to get rid of the burthen of our conquests. This author knows that France did not put those colonies into the hands of England; but he well knows who did put the most valuable of them into the hands of France.

In the next place, our author* is pleased to consider the conquest of those colonies in no other light than as a convenience for the remittances to France, which he asserts that the war had before suspended, but for which a way was opened (by our conquest) as secure as in time of peace. I charitably hope he knows nothing of the subject. I referred him lately to our commanders, for the resistance of the French colonies; I now wish he would apply to our custom-house entries, and our merchants, for the advantages which we derived from them.

In 1761, there was no entry of goods from any of the conquered places but Guadaloupe; in that year it stood thus:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Imports from Guadaloupe, | - | value, £482,179 |

* P. 9.

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| | |
|---|---|
| In 1762, when we had not yet delivered up our conquests, the account was, | |
| Guadaloupe, - - - - - - | £.513,244 |
| Martinico, - - - - - - | 288,425 |
| Total imports in 1762, | value, £.801,669 |
| In 1763, after we had delivered up the sovereignty of these islands, but kept open a communication with them, the imports were, | |
| Guadaloupe, - - - - - | £.412,303 |
| Martinico, - - - - - - | 344,161 |
| Havannah, - - - - - - | 249,386 |
| Total imports in 1763, | value, £.1,005,850 |

Besides, I find in the account of bullion imported and brought to the bank, that during that period in which the intercourse with the Havannah was open, we received at that one shop, in treasure, from that one place £.559,810; in the year 1763, £.389,450; so that the import from these places in that year amounted to £.1,395,300.

On this state the reader will observe, that I take the imports from, and not the exports to, these conquests, as the measure of the advantages which we derived from them. I do so for reasons which will be somewhat worthy the attention of such readers as are fond of this species of inquiry. I say therefore I choose the import article, as the best, and indeed the only standard we can have, of the value of the West India trade. Our export entry does not comprehend the greatest trade we carry on with any of the West India islands, the sale of negroes: nor does it give any idea of two other advantages we draw from them; the remittances for money spent here, and the payment of part of the ba-



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lance of the North American trade. It is therefore quite ridiculous, to strike a balance merely on the face of an excess of imports and exports, in that commerce; though, in most foreign branches, it is, on the whole, the best method. If we should take that standard, it would appear, that the balance with our own islands is, annually, several hundred thousand pounds against this country.* Such is its aspect on the custom-house entries; but we know the direct contrary to be the fact. We know that the West Indians are always indebted to our merchants, and that the value of every shilling of West India produce is English property. So that our import from them, and not our export, ought always to be considered as their true value; and this corrective ought to be applied to all general balances of our trade, which are formed on the ordinary principles.

If possible, this was more emphatically true of the French West India islands, whilst they continued in our hands. That none, or only a very contemptible part of the value of this produce, could be remitted to France, the author will see, perhaps with unwillingness, but with the clearest conviction, if he considers, that in the year 1763, *after we had ceased to export* to the isles of Guadaloupe and Martinico, and to the Havannah, and after the colonies were free to send all their produce to Old France and Spain, if they had any remittance to make; he will see, that we imported from those places, in that year, to the amount of £1,395,300. So far was the whole annual produce of these islands from being adequate to the payments of their annual call upon us, that this mighty additional importation was necessary, though not quite sufficient, to discharge the debts contracted in the few years we held them. The property, therefore, of their whole produce, was ours; not only during the war,

| | |
|---|---|
| * Total imports from the West Indies in 1764, | *L.*2,909,411 |
| Exports to ditto in ditto, - - - - - - | 896,511 |
| Excess of imports, - - - - - - | *L.*2,012,900 |

In this, which is the common way of stating the balance, it will appear upwards of two millions against us, which is ridiculous.

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but even for more than a year after the peace. The author, I hope, will not again venture upon so rash and discouraging a proposition, concerning the nature and effect of those conquests, as to call them a convenience to the remittances of France; he sees by this account, that what he asserts is not only without foundation, but even impossible to be true.

As to our trade at that time, he labours with all his might to represent it as absolutely ruined, or on the very edge of ruin. Indeed, as usual with him, he is often as equivocal in his expression, as he is clear in his design. Sometimes he more than insinuates a decay of our commerce in that war; sometimes he admits an increase of exports; but it is in order to depreciate the advantages we might appear to derive from that increase, whenever it should come to be proved against him. He tells you*, "that it was chiefly occasioned by the demands of our own fleets and armies, and, instead of bringing wealth to the nation, was to be paid for by oppressive taxes upon the people of England." Never was any thing more destitute of foundation. It might be proved with the greatest ease, from the nature and quality of the goods exported, as well as from the situation of the places to which our merchandise was sent, and which the war could no wise affect, that the supply of our fleets and armies, could not have been the cause of this wonderful increase of trade; its cause was evident to the whole world; the ruin of the trade of France, and our possession of her colonies. What wonderful effects this cause produced, the reader will see below†; and he will form on that account some judgment of the author's candour or information.

* P. 6.

| 1754. | | | | *L.* | *s.* | *d.* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| † Total export of British goods, | | | value, | 8,317,506 | 15 | 3 |
| Ditto of foreign goods in time, | - | - | - | 2,910,836 | 14 | 9 |
| Ditto of ditto out of time, | - | - | - | 559,485 | 2 | 10 |
| Total exports of all kinds, | - | - | - | 11,787,828 | 12 | 10 |
| Total imports, | - | - | - | 8,093,472 | 15 | 0 |
| Balance in favour of England, | - | - | - | *L.*3,694,355 | 17 | 10 |

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Admit however that a great part of our export, though nothing is more remote from fact, was owing to the supply of our fleets and armies; was it not something?—was it not peculiarly fortunate for a nation, that she was able from her own bosom to contribute largely to the supply of her armies militating in so many distant countries? The author allows that France did not enjoy the same advantages. But it is remarkable throughout his whole book, that those circumstances which have ever been considered as great benefits, and decisive proofs of national superiority, are, when in our hands, taken either in diminution of some other apparent advantage, or even sometimes as positive misfortunes. The opticks of that politician must be of a strange confirmation, who beholds every thing in this distorted shape.

So far as to our trade. With regard to our navigation, he is still more uneasy at our situation, and still more fallacious in his state of it. In his text, he affirms it "to have been *entirely* engrossed by the neutral nations."* This he asserts roundly and boldly, and without the least concern;

* P. 7. See also p. 13.

| 1761. | *L.* | *s.* | *d.* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Total export of British goods, - - - | 10,649,581 | 12 | 6 |
| Ditto of foreign goods in time, - - - | 3,553,692 | 7 | 1 |
| Ditto of ditto out of time, - - - - | 355,015 | 0 | 2 |
| Total exports of all kinds, - - - - | 14,558,288 | 19 | 9 |
| Total imports, - - - - - | 9,294,915 | 1 | 6 |
| Balance in favour of England, - - - | *L.*5,263,373 | 18 | 3 |

Here is the state of our trade in 1761, compared with a very good year of profound peace: both are taken from the authentick entries at the custom-house. How the author can contrive to make this increase of the export of English produce agree with his account of the dreadful want of hands in England, p. 9, unless he supposes manufactures to be made without hands, I really do not see. It is painful to be so frequently obliged to set this author right in matters of fact. This state will fully refute all that he has said or insinuated upon the difficulties and decay of our trade, p. 6, 7, and 9.

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although it cost no more than a single glance of the eye upon his own margin to see the full refutation of this assertion. His own account proves against him, that in the year 1761, the British shipping amounted to 527,557 tons —the foreign to no more than 180,102. The medium of his six years British, 2,449,555 tons—foreign only 905,690. This state (his own) demonstrates that the neutral nations did not *entirely engross our navigation.*

I am willing from a strain of candour to admit that this author speaks at random; that he is only slovenly and inaccurate, and not fallacious. In matters of account, however, this want of care is not excusable; and the difference between neutral nations entirely engrossing our navigation, and being only subsidiary to a vastly augmented trade, makes a most material difference to his argument. From that principle of fairness, though the author speaks otherwise, I am willing to suppose he means no more than that our navigation had so declined as to alarm us with the probable loss of this valuable object. I shall however shew, that his whole proposition, whatever modifications he may please to give it, is without foundation; that our navigation was not decreased; that, on the contrary, it was greatly increased in the war; that it was increased by the war; and that it was probable the same cause would continue to augment it to a still greater height; to what an height it is hard to say, had our success continued.

But first, I must observe, I am much less solicitous whether his fact be true or no, than whether his principle is well established. Cases are dead things, principles are living and productive. I then affirm that, if in time of war our trade had the good fortune to increase, and at the same time a large, nay the largest, proportion of carriage had been engrossed by neutral nations, it ought not in itself to have been considered as a circumstance of distress. War is a time of inconvenience to trade; in general it must be straitened, and must find its way as it can. It is often happy for nations that they are able to call in neutral navigation. They all aim at it. France endeavoured at it, but

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could not compass it. Will this author say, that in a war with Spain, such an assistance would not be of absolute necessity? that it would not be the most gross of all follies to refuse it?

In the next place, his method of stating a medium of six years of war, and six years of peace, to decide this question, is altogether unfair. To say, in derogation of the advantages of a war, that navigation is not equal to what it was in time of peace, is what hitherto has never been heard of. No war ever bore that test but the war which he so bitterly laments. One may lay it down as a maxim, that an average estimate of an object in a steady course of rising or of falling, must in its nature be an unfair one; more particularly if the cause of the rise or fall be visible, and its continuance in any degree probable. Average estimates are never just but when the object fluctuates, and no reason can be assigned why it should not continue still to fluctuate. The author chooses to allow nothing at all for this: he has taken an average of six years of the war. He knew, for every body knows, that the first three years were on the whole rather unsuccessful; and that, in consequence of this ill success, trade sunk, and navigation declined with it; but *that grand delusion* of the three last years turned the scale in our favour. At the beginning of that war (as in the commencement of every war,) traders were struck with a sort of panick. Many went out of the freighting business. But by degrees, as the war continued, the terrour wore off; the danger came to be better appreciated, and better provided against; our trade was carried on in large fleets, under regular convoys, and with great safety. The freighting business revived. The ships were fewer, but much larger; and though the number decreased, the tonnage was vastly augmented; insomuch that in 1761 the *British* shipping had risen by the author's own account 527,557 tons.—In the last year he has given us of the peace it amounted to no more than 494,772; that is, in the last year of the war it was 32,785 tons more than in the correspondent year of his peace average. No year of the peace exceeded it except one, and that but little.

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The fair account of the matter is this. Our trade had, as we have just seen, increased to so astonishing a degree in 1761, as to employ British and foreign ships to the amount of 707,659 tons, which is 149,500 more than we employed in the last year of the peace.—Thus our trade increased more than a fifth; our British navigation had increased likewise with this astonishing increase of trade, but was not able to keep pace with it; and we added about 120,000 ton of foreign shipping to the 60,000, which had been employed in the last year of the peace. Whatever happened to our shipping in the former years of the war, this would be no true state of the case at the time of the treaty. If we had lost something in the beginning, we had then recovered, and more than recovered, all our losses. Such is the ground of the doleful complaints of the author, that *the carrying trade was wholly engrossed by the neutral nations.*

I have done fairly, and even very moderately, in taking this year, and not his average, as the standard of what might be expected in future, had the war continued. The author will be compelled to allow it, unless he undertakes to shew; first, that the possession of Canada, Martinico, Guadaloupe, Grenada, the Havannah, the Philippines, the whole African trade, the whole East India trade, and the whole Newfoundland fishery, had no certain inevitable tendency to increase the British shipping; unless, in the second place, he can prove that those trades were, or might, by law or indulgence, be carried on in foreign vessels; and unless, thirdly, he can demonstrate that the premium of insurance on British ships was rising as the war continued. He can prove not one of these points. I will shew him a fact more that is mortal to his assertions. It is the state of our shipping in 1762. The author had his reasons for stopping short at the preceding year. It would have appeared, had he proceeded farther, that our tonnage was in a course of uniform augmentation, owing to the freight derived from our foreign conquests, and to the perfect security of our navigation from our clear and decided superiority at sea. This, I say, would have appeared from the state of the two years:

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| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1761. | British, | - - | 527,557 tons. |
| 1762. | Ditto, | - - | 559,537 tons. |
| 1761. | Foreign | - - | 180,102 tons. |
| 1762. | Ditto, | - - | 129,502 tons. |

The two last years of the peace were in no degree equal to these. Much of the navigation of 1763 was also owing to the war; this is manifest from the large part of it employed in the carriage from the ceded islands, with which the communication still continued open. No such circumstances of glory and advantage ever attended upon a war. Too happy will be our lot, if we should again be forced into a war, to behold any thing that shall resemble them; and if we were not then the better for them, it is not in the ordinary course of God's providence to mend our condition.

In vain does the author declaim on the high premiums given for the loans during the war. His long note swelled with calculations on that subject (even supposing the most inaccurate of all calculations to be just) would be entirely thrown away, did it not serve to raise a wonderful opinion of his financial skill in those who are not less surprised than edified, when, with a solemn face and mysterious air, they are told that two and two make four. For what else do we learn from this note? That the more expense is incurred by a nation, the more money will be required to defray it; that, in proportion to the continuance of that expense, will be the continuance of borrowing; that the increase of borrowing and the increase of debt will go hand in hand; and lastly, that the more money you want, the harder it will be to get it; and that the scarcity of the commodity will enhance the price. Who ever doubted the truth, or the insignificance, of these propositions? what do they prove? that war is expensive, and peace desirable. They contain nothing more than a common-place against war; the easiest of all topicks. To bring them home to his purpose, he ought to have shewn, that our enemies had money upon better terms; which he has not shewn, neither can he. I shall speak more fully to this point in another place. He ought to have shewn, that the money they raised, upon

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whatever terms, had procured them a more lucrative return. He knows that our expenditure purchased commerce and conquest: theirs acquired nothing but defeat and bankruptcy.

Thus the author has laid down his ideas on the subject of war. Next follow those he entertains on that of peace. The treaty of Paris upon the whole has his approbation. Indeed, if his account of the war be just, he might have spared himself all further trouble. The rest is drawn on as an *inevitable* conclusion.* If the house of Bourbon had the advantage, she must give the law; and the peace, though it were much worse than it is, had still been a good one. But, as the world is yet *deluded* on the state of that war, other arguments are necessary; and the author has in my opinion very ill supplied them. He tells of many things we have got, and of which he has made out a kind of bill. This matter may be brought within a very narrow compass, if we come to consider the requisites of a good peace under some plain distinct heads. I apprehend they may be reduced to these: 1. Stability; 2. Indemnification; 3. Alliance.

As to the first, the author more than obscurely hints in several places, that he thinks the peace not likely to last. However, he does furnish a security; a security, in any light, I fear, but insufficient; on his hypothesis, surely a very odd one, "By stipulating for the entire possession of the continent, (says he) the restored French islands are become in some measure dependent on the British empire; and the good faith of France in observing the treaty guaranteed by the value at which she estimates their possession."† This author soon grows weary of his principles. They seldom last him for two pages together. When the advantages of the war were to be depreciated, then the loss of the ultramarine colonies lightened the expenses of France, facilitated her remittances, and therefore *her colonists put them into our hands.* According to this author's system, the actual possession of those colonies ought to give us little or no advantage in the negotiation for peace; and yet the chance of possessing them

* P. 12, 13. † P. 17.



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on a future occasion gives a perfect security for the preservation of that peace.* The conquest of the Havannah, if it did not serve Spain, rather distressed England, says our author.†. But the molestation which her galleons may suffer from our station in Pensacola gives us advantages, for which we were not allowed to credit the nation for the Havannah itself; a place surely full as well situated for every external purpose as Pensacola, and of more internal benefit than ten thousand Pensacolas.

The author sets very little by conquests ;‡ I suppose it is because he makes them so very lightly. On this subject he speaks with the greatest certainty imaginable. We have, according to him, nothing to do, but to go and take possession, whenever we think proper, of the French and Spanish settlements. It were better that he had examined a little what advantage the peace gave us towards the invasion of these colonies, which we did not possess before the peace. It would not have been amiss if he had consulted the publick experience, and our commanders, concerning the absolute certainty of those conquests on which he is pleased to found our security. And if, after all, he should have discovered them to be so very sure, and so very easy, he might, at least, to preserve consistency, have looked a few pages back, and (no unpleasing thing to him) listened to himself, where he says, "that the most successful enterprise could not compensate to the nation for the waste of its people, by carrying on war in unhealthy climates."§ A position which he repeats again, p. 9. So that, according to himself his security is not worth the suit; according to fact, he has only a chance, God knows what a chance, of getting at it; and therefore, according to reason, the giving up the most valuable of all possessions, in hopes to conquer them back, under any advantage of situation, is the most ridiculous se-

* P. 6.

† "Our merchants suffered by the detention of the galleons, as their correspondents in Spain were disabled from paying them for their goods sent to America." State of the Nation, p. 7.

‡ P. 12, 13. § P. 6.

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curity that ever was imagined for the peace of a nation. It is true his friends did not give up Canada; they could not give up every thing; let us make the most of it. We have Canada, we know its value. We have not the French any longer to fight in North America; and, from this circumstance, we derive considerable advantages. But here let me rest a little. The author touches upon a string, which sounds under his fingers but a tremulous and melancholy note. North America was once indeed a great strength to this nation, in opportunity of ports, in ships, in provisions, in men. We found her a sound, an active, a vigorous member of the empire. I hope, by wise management, she will again become so. But one of our capital present misfortunes is, her discontent and disobedience. To which of the author's favourites this discontent is owing, we all know but too sufficiently. It would be a dismal event, if this foundation of his security, and indeed of all our publick strength, should, in reality, become our weakness; and if all the powers of this empire, which ought to fall with a compacted weight upon the head of our enemies, should be dissipated and distracted by a jealous vigilance, or by hostile attempts upon one another. Ten Canadas cannot restore that security for the peace, and for every thing valuable to this country, which we have lost along with the affection and the obedience of our colonies. He is the wise minister, he is the true friend to Britain, who shall be able to restore it.

To return to the security for the peace. The author tells us, that the original great purposes of the war were more than accomplished by the treaty. Surely he has experience and reading enough to know that, in the course of a war, events may happen, that render its original very far from being its principal purpose. This original may dwindle by circumstances, so as to become not a purpose of the second or even the third magnitude. I trust this is so obvious, that it will not be necessary to put cases for its illustration. In that war, as soon as Spain entered into the quarrel, the security of North America was no longer the sole nor the foremost object. The *Family*

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*Compact* had been I know not how long before in agitation. But then it was that we saw produced into day-light an action the most odious and most formidable of all the conspiracies against the liberties of Europe, that ever has been framed. The war with Spain was the first fruits of that league; and a security against that league ought to have been the fundamental point of a pacification with the powers who compose it. We had materials in our hands to have constructed that security in such a manner as never to be shaken. But how did the virtuous and able men of our author labour for this great end? They took no one step towards it. On the contrary they countenanced, and indeed, as far as it depended on them, recognised it in all its parts; for our plenipotentiary treated with those who acted for the two crowns, as if they had been different ministers of the same monarch. The Spanish minister received his instructions, not from Madrid; but from Versailles.

This was not hid from our ministers at home, and the discovery ought to have alarmed them, if the good of their country had been the object of their anxiety. They could not but have seen that the whole Spanish monarchy was melted down into the cabinet of Versailles. But they thought this circumstance an advantage; as it enabled them to go through with their work the more expeditiously. Expedition was every thing to them; because France might happen during a protracted negociation to discover the great imposition of our victories.

In the same spirit they negociated the terms of the peace. If it were thought advisable not to take any positive security from Spain, the most obvious principles of policy dictated that the burthen of the cessions ought to fall upon France; and that every thing which was of grace and favour should be given to Spain. Spain could not, on her part, have executed a capital article in the family compact, which obliged her to compensate the losses of France. At least she could not do it in America; for she was expressly precluded by the treaty of Utrecht from ceding any territory or giving any advantage in trade to that power. What did our ministers? They took from Spain the territory of Flo-

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rida, an object of no value except to show our dispositions to be quite equal at least towards both powers; and they enabled France to compensate Spain by the gift of Louisiana; loading us with all the harshness, leaving the act of kindness with France, and opening thereby a door to the fulfilling of this the most consolidating article of the family compact. Accordingly that dangerous league, thus abetted and authorised by the English ministry without an attempt to invalidate it in any way, or in any of its parts, exists to this hour; and has grown stronger and stronger every hour of its existence.

As to the second component of a good peace, *compensation*, I have but little trouble; the author has said nothing upon that head. He has nothing to say. After a war of such expense, this ought to have been a capital consideration. But on what he has been so prudently silent, I think it is right to speak plainly. All our new acquisitions together, at this time, scarce afford matter of revenue either at home or abroad, sufficient to defray the expense of their establishments; not one shilling towards the reduction of our debt. Guadaloupe or Martinico alone would have given us material aid; much in the way of duties, much in the way of trade and navigation. A good ministry would have considered how a renewal of the *Assiento* might have been obtained. We had as much right to ask it at the treaty of Paris as at the treaty of Utrecht. We had incomparably more in our hands to purchase it. Floods of treasure would have poured into this kingdom from such a source; and, under proper management, no small part of it would have taken a publick direction, and have fructified an exhausted exchequer.

If this gentleman's hero of finance, instead of flying from a treaty, which, though he now defends, he could not approve, and would not oppose; if he, instead of shifting into an office, which removed him from the manufacture of the treaty, had, by his credit with the then great director, acquired for us these, or any of these objects, the possession of Guadaloupe or Martinico, or the renewal of the *Assiento*, he might have held his head high in his country; because

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he would have performed real service; ten thousand times more real service, than all the œconomy of which this writer is perpetually talking, or all the little tricks of finance which the expertest juggler of the treasury can practice, could amount to in a thousand years. But the occasion is lost; the time is gone, perhaps, for ever.

As to the third requisite, *alliance*, there too the author is silent. What strength of that kind did they acquire? They got no one new ally; they stript the enemy of not a single old one. They disgusted (how justly, or unjustly, matters not) every ally we had; and from that time to this, we stand friendless in Europe. But of this naked condition of their country, I know some people are not ashamed. They have their system of politicks; our ancestors grew great by another. In this manner these virtuous men concluded the peace; and their practice is only consonant to their theory.

Many things more might be observed on this curious head of our author's speculations. But, taking leave of what the writer says in his serious part, if he be serious in any part, I shall only just point out a piece of his pleasantry. No man, I believe, ever denied that the time for making peace is that in which the best terms may be obtained. But what that time is, together with the use that has been made of it, we are to judge by seeing whether terms adequate to our advantages, and to our necessities, have been actually obtained.—Here is the pinch of the question, and to which the author ought to have set his shoulders in earnest. Instead of doing this, he slips out of the harness by a jest; and sneeringly tells us, that, to determine this point, we must know the secrets of the French and Spanish cabinets,*

* Something however has transpired in the quarrels among those concerned in that transaction. It seems the *good Genius* of Britain so much vaunted by our author, did his duty nobly. Whilst we were gaining such advantages, the court of France was astonished at our concessions. "J'ai apporte a Versailles, il est vrai, les ratifications du Roi d'Angleterre *a vostre grand etonnement, et a celui de bien d'autres.* Je dois cela au bontes du Roi d'Angleterre, a celles de Milord Bute, a Mons. le Comte de Viry, a Mons. le Duc de Nivernois, et en fin a mon scavoir faire." Lettres, &c. du Chev. D'Eon, p. 51.

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and that parliament was pleased to approve the treaty of peace without calling for the correspondence concerning it. How just this sarcasm on that parliament may be, I say not; but how becoming in the author, I leave it to his friends to determine.

Having thus gone through the questions of war and peace, the author proceeds to state our debt, and the interest which it carried, at the time of the treaty, with the unfairness and inaccuracy, however, which distinguish all his assertions, and all his calculations. To detect every fallacy, and rectify every mistake, would be endless. It will be enough to point out a few of them, in order to shew how unsafe it is to place any thing like an implicit trust in such a writer.

The interest of debt contracted during the war is stated by the author at £.2,614,892. The particulars appear in pages 14 and 15. Among them is stated the unfunded debt, £.9,975,017, supposed to carry interest on a medium at 3 *per cent.* which amounts to £.299,250. We are referred to the *Considerations on the Trade and Finances of the Kingdom*, p. 22, for the particulars of that unfunded debt. Turn to the work, and to the place referred to by the author himself, if you have a mind to see a clear detection of a capital fallacy of this article in his account. You will there see that this unfunded debt consists of the nine following articles: the remaining subsidy to the duke of Brunswick; the remaining *dedommagement* to the Landgrave of Hesse; the German demands; the army and ordnance extraordinaries; the deficiencies of grants and funds; Mr. Touchet's claim; the debts due to Nova Scotia and Barbadoes; Exchequer bills; and Navy debt. The extreme fallacy of this state cannot escape any reader who will be at the pains to compare the interest money, with which he affirms us to have been loaded, in his *State of the Nation*, with the items of the principal debt to which he refers in his *Considerations*. The reader must observe, that of this long list of nine articles, only two, the exchequer bills, and part of the navy debt, carried any interest at all. The first amounted to £.1,800,000; and this undoubtedly carried interest. The whole navy debt indeed amounted to

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£.4,576,915; but of this only a *part* carried interest. The author of the *Considerations*, &c. labours to prove this very point in p. 18; and Mr. G. has always defended himself upon the same ground, for the insufficient provision he made for the discharge of that debt. The reader may see their own authority for it.*

Mr. G. did in fact provide no more than £.2,150,000 for the discharge of these bills in two years. It is much to be wished that these gentlemen would lay their heads together, that they would consider well this matter, and agree upon something. For when the scanty provision made for the unfunded debt is to be vindicated, then we are told it is a very *small part* of that debt which carries interest. But when the publick is to be represented in a miserable condition, and the consequences of the late war to be laid before us in dreadful colours, then we are to be told that the unfunded debt is within a trifle of ten millions, and so large a portion of it carries interest that we must not compute less than 3 *per cent.* upon the *whole.*

In the year 1764, parliament voted £.650,000 towards

* "The navy bills are not due till six months after they have been issued; six months also of the seamen's wages by act of parliament must be, and in consequence of the rules prescribed by that act, twelve months wages generally, and often much more are retained; and there has been besides at all times a large arrear of pay, which, though kept in the account, could never be claimed, the persons to whom it was due having left neither assignees nor representatives. The precise amount of such sums cannot be ascertained; but they can hardly be reckoned less than 13 or 14 hundred thousand pounds. On 31st Dec. 1754, when the navy debt was reduced nearly as low as it could be, it still amounted to 1,296,567*l.* 18*s.* 11 3-4*d.* consisting chiefly of articles which could not then be discharged; such articles will be larger now, in proportion to the increase of the establishment; and an allowance must always be made for them in judging of the state of the navy debt, though they are not distinguishable in the account. In providing for that which is payable, the principal object of the legislature is always to discharge the bills, for they are the greatest article; they bear an interest of 4 *per cent.*; and, when the quantity of them is large, they are a heavy incumbrance upon all money transactions."

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the discharge of the navy debt. This sum could not be applied solely to the discharge of bills carrying interest; because part of the debt due on seamen's wages must have been paid, and some bills carried no interest at all. Notwithstanding this, we find by an account of the journals of the house of commons, in the following sessions, that the navy debt, carrying interest was, on the 31st of December, 1764, no more than £.1,687,442. I am sure therefore that I admit too much when I admit the navy debt carrying interest after the creation of the navy annuities in the year 1763, to have been £.2,200,000. Add the exchequer bills; and the whole unfunded debt carrying interest will be four millions instead of ten; and the annual interest paid for it at 4 *per cent.* will be £.160,000 instead of £.299,250. An errour of no small magnitude, and which could not have been owing to inadvertency.

The misrepresentation of the increase of the peace establishment is still more extraordinary than that of the interest of the unfunded debt. The increase is great undoubtedly. However, the author finds no fault with it, and urges it only as a matter of argument to support the strange chimerical proposals he is to make us in the close of his work for the increase of revenue. The greater he made that establishment, the stronger he expected to stand in argument: but, whatever he expected or proposed, he should have stated the matter fairly. He tells us that this establishment is near £.1,500,000 more than it was in 1752, 1753, and other years of peace. This he has done in his usual manner, by assertion, without troubling himself either with proof or probability. For he has not given us any state of the peace establishment in the years 1753 and 1754, the time which he means to compare with the present. As I am obliged to force him to that precision, from which he always flies as from his most dangerous enemy, I have been at the trouble to search the journals in the period between the two last wars: and I find that the peace establishment, consisting of the navy, the ordnance, and the several incidental expenses, amounted to £.2,346,594. Now is this writer wild enough to imagine, that the peace establishment of 1764



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and the subsequent years, made up for the same articles, is £.3,800,000 and upwards? His assertion however goes to this. But I must take the liberty of correcting him in this gross mistake, and from an authority he cannot refuse, from his favourite work, and standing authority, the Considerations. We find there, p. 43,* the peace establishment of 1764 and 1765 stated at £.3,609,700. This is near two hundred thousand pounds less than that given in The State of the Nation. But even from this, in order to render the articles which compose the peace establishment in the two periods correspondent (for otherwise they cannot be compared), we must deduct first, his articles of the deficiency of land and malt, which amount to £.300,000. They certainly are no part of the establishment; nor are they included in that sum, which I have stated above for the establishment in the time of the former peace. If they were proper to be stated at all, they ought to be stated in both accounts. We must also deduct the deficiencies of funds, £.202,400. These deficiencies are the difference between the interest charged on the publick for monies borrowed, and the produce of the taxes laid for the discharge of that interest. Annual provision is indeed to be made for them by parliament: but in the inquiry before us, which is only what charge is brought on the publick by interest paid or to be paid for money borrowed, the utmost that the author

| | |
|---|---|
| * Navy | *L.*1,450,900 |
| Army | 1,268,500 |
| Ordnance | 174,600 |
| The four American governments | 19,200 |
| General surveys in America | 1,600 |
| Foundling Hospital | 38,000 |
| To the African committee | 13,000 |
| For the civil establishment on the coast of Africa | 5,500 |
| Militia | 100,000 |
| Deficiency of land and malt | 300,000 |
| Deficiency of funds | 202,400 |
| Extraordinaries of the army and navy | 35,000 |
| Total | *L.*3,609,700 |

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should do, is to bring into the account the full interest for all that money. This he has done in p. 15; and he repeats it in p. 18, the very page I am now examining, £.2,614,892. To comprehend afterwards in the peace establishment the deficiency of the fund created for payment of that interest, would be laying twice to the account of the war part of the same sum. Suppose ten millions borrowed at 4 *per cent.* and the fund for payment of the interest to produce no more than £.200,000. The whole annual charge on the publick is £.400,000. It can be no more. But to charge the interest in one part of the account, and then the deficiency in the other, would be charging £.600,000. The deficiency of funds must therefore be also deducted from the peace establishment in the Considerations; and then the peace establishment in that author will be reduced to the same articles with those included in the sum I have already mentioned for the peace establishment before the last war, in the year 1753, and 1754.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Peace establishment in the Considerations | | £.3,609,700 |
| Deduct deficiency of land and malt | 300,000 | |
| Ditto of funds - - - | 202,400 | |
| | | 502,400 |
| | | 3,107,300 |
| Peace establishment before the late war, in which no deficiencies of land and malt, or funds are included - - - - - | | 2,346,594 |
| | Difference | £.760,706 |

Being about half the sum which our author has been pleased to suppose it.

Let us put the whole together. The author states,

| | |
|---|---|
| Difference of peace establishment before and since the war - - - - | 1,500,000 |

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| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Interest of debt contracted by the war - | | £.2,614,892 |
| | | 4,114,892 |
| The *real* difference in the peace establishment is - - - | 760,706 | |
| The actual interest of the funded debt, including that charged on the sinking fund | 2,315,642 | |
| The actual interest of unfunded debt at most | 160,000 | |
| Total interest of debt contracted by the war - - - - | 2,475,642 | |
| Increase of peace establishments, and interest of new debt - - - - - | | 3,236,348 |
| Errour of the author | | £.878,544 |

It is true, the extraordinaries of the army have been found considerably greater than the author of the Considerations was pleased to fortel they would be. The author of The Present State avails himself of that increase, and, finding it suit his purpose, sets the whole down in the peace establishment of the present times. If this is allowed him, his errour perhaps may be reduced to £.700,000. But I doubt the author of the Considerations will not thank him for admitting £.200,000 and upwards as the peace establishment for extraordinaries, when that author has so much laboured to confine them within £.35,000.

These are some of the capital fallacies of the author. To break the thread of my discourse as little as possible, I have thrown into the margin many instances, though God knows far from the whole, of his inaccuracies, inconsistencies, and want of common care. I think myself obliged to take some notice of them, in order to take off from any authority this writer may have; and to put an end to the deference which careless men are apt to pay to one who boldly arrays his accounts, and marshals his figures, in per-

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fect confidence that their correctness will never be examined.*

However, for argument, I am content to take his state of it. The debt was and is enormous. The war was expensive. The best œconomy had not perhaps been used. But I must observe, that war and œconomy are things not easily reconciled; and that the attempt of leaning towards parsimony in such a state may be the worst management, and in

* Upon the money borrowed in 1760, the premium of one *per cent.* was for 21 years, not for 20; this annuity has been paid eight years instead of seven; the sum paid is therefore *L.*640,000 instead of 560,000; the remaining term is worth 10 years and a quarter instead of 11 years;* its value is *L.*820,000 instead of *L.*880,000; and the whole value of that premium is *L.*1,460,000, instead of *L.*1,440,000. The like errours are observable in his computation on the additional capital of three *per cent.* on the loan of that year. In like manner, on the loan of 1762, the author computes on five years' payment instead of six; and says in express terms, that take 5 from 19, and there remains 13. These are not errours of the pen or the press; the several computations pursued in this part of the work with great diligence and earnestness prove them errours upon much deliberation. Thus the premiums in 1759 are cast up *L.*90,000 too little, an errour in the first rule of arithmetic. "The annuities borrowed in 1756 and 1758 are," says he, "to continue till redeemed by parliament." He does not take notice that the first are irredeemable till February 1771, the other till July 1782. In this the amount of the premiums is computed on the time which they have run. Weakly and ignorantly; for he might have added to this, and strengthened his argument, such as it is, by charging also the value of the additional one *per cent.* from the day on which he wrote to, at least that day on which these annuities become redeemable. To make ample amends, however, he has added to the premiums of 15 *per cent.* in 1759, and three *per cent.* in 1760, the annuity paid for them since their commencement; the fallacy of which is manifest; for the premiums in these cases can be neither more nor less than the additional capital for which the publick stands engaged, and is just the same whether five or 500 years' annuity has been paid for it. In private life, no man persuades himself that he has borrowed *L.*200, because he happens to have paid 20 years' interest on loan of *L.*100.

* See Smart and Demoivre.

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the end the worst œconomy in the world, hazarding the total loss of all the charge incurred, and of every thing along with it.

But *cui bono* all this detail of our debt? has the author given a single light towards any material reduction of it? Not a glimmering. We shall see in its place what sort of thing he proposes. But before he commences his operations, in order to scare the publick imagination, he raises by art magick a thick mist before our eyes, through which glare the most ghastly and horrible phantoms:

> Hunc igitur terrorem animi tenebrasque necesse est,
> Non radii solis, neque lucida tela diei
> Discutiant, sed naturæ species ratioque.

Let us therefore calmly, if we can for the fright into which he has put us, appreciate those dreadful and deformed gorgons and hydras, which inhabit the joyless regions of an imagination, fruitful in nothing but the production of monsters.

His whole representation is founded on the supposed operation of our debt, upon our manufactures, and our trade. To this cause he attributes a certain supposed dearness of the necessaries of life, which must compel our manufacturers to emigrate to cheaper countries, particularly to France, and with them the manufacture. Thence consumption declining, and with it revenue. He will not permit the real balance of our trade to be estimated so high as £.2,500,000; and the interest of the debt to foreigners carries off £.1,500,000 of that balance. France is not in the same condition. Then follow his wailings and lamentings, which he renews over and over, according to his custom—a declining trade, and decreasing specie—on the point of becoming tributary to France—of losing Ireland—of having the colonies torn away from us.

The first thing upon which I shall observe is,* what he takes for granted as the clearest of all propositions, the emigration of our manufactures to France. I undertake to say

* P. 30, 31, 32.

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that this assertion is totally groundless, and I challenge the author to bring any sort of proof of it. If living is cheaper in France, that is, to be had for less specie, wages are proportionably lower. No manufacturer, let the living be what it will, was ever known to fly for refuge to low wages. Money is the first thing which attracts him. Accordingly our wages attract artificers from all parts of the world. From two shillings to one shilling, is a fall, in all men's imaginations, which no calculation upon a difference in the price of the necessaries of life can compensate. But it will be hard to prove, that a French artificer is better fed, clothed, lodged, and warmed, than one in England; for that is the sense, and the only sense, of living cheaper. If, in truth and fact, our artificer fares as well in all these respects as one in the same state in France—how stands the matter in point of opinion and prejudice, the springs by which people in that class of life are chiefly actuated? The idea of our common people, concerning French living, is dreadful; altogether as dreadful as our author's can possibly be of the state of his own country; a way of thinking that will hardly ever prevail on them to desert to France.*

But, leaving the author's speculations, the fact is, that they have not deserted; and of course the manufacture cannot be departed, or departing, with them. I am not indeed able to get at all the details of our manufactures; though, I think, I have taken full as much pains for that purpose as our author. Some I have by me; and they do not hitherto, thank God, support the author's complaint, unless a vast increase of the quantity of goods manufactured be a proof of losing the manufacture. On a view of the registers in the Westriding of Yorkshire, for three years before the war, and for the three last, it appears, that the quantities of cloths entered were as follow:

* In a course of years a few manufacturers have been tempted abroad, not by cheap living, but by immense premiums, to set up as masters, and to introduce the manufacture. This must happen in every country eminent for the skill of its artificers, and has nothing to do with taxes and the price of provisions.

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| | Pieces broad. | Pieces narrow. |
|---|---|---|
| 1752, | 60,724 | 72,442 |
| 1753, | 55,358 | 71,618 |
| 1754, | 56,070 | 72,394 |
| | 172,152 | 216,454 |

| | Pieces broad. | Pieces narrow. |
|---|---|---|
| 1765, | 54,660 | 77,419 |
| 1766, | 72,575 | 78,893 |
| 1767, | 102,428 | 78,819 |
| 3 years, ending 1767, | 229,663 | 235,131 |
| 3 years, ending 1754, | 172,152 | 216,454 |
| Increase, | 57,511 | 18,677 |

In this manner this capital branch of manufacture has increased, under the increase of taxes; and this not from a declining, but from a greatly flourishing period of commerce. I may say the same on the best authority of the fabrick of thin goods at Halifax; of the bays at Rochdale; and of that infinite variety of admirable manufactures that grow and extend every year among the spirited, inventive, and enterprising traders of Manchester.

A trade sometimes seems to perish when it only assumes a different form. Thus the coarsest woollens were formerly exported in great quantities to Russia. The Russians now supply themselves with these goods. But the export thither of finer cloths has increased in proportion as the other has declined. Possibly some parts of the kingdom may have felt something like a languor in business. Objects like trade and manufacture, which the very attempt to confine would certainly destroy, frequently change their place; and thereby, far from being lost, are often highly improved. Thus some manufactures have decayed in the west and south,

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which have made new and more vigorous shoots when transplanted into the north. And here it is impossible to pass by, though the author has said nothing upon it, the vast addition to the mass of British trade, which has been made by the improvement of Scotland. What does he think of the commerce of the city of Glasgow, and of the manufactures of Paisley and all the adjacent country? has this any thing like the deadly aspect and *facies Hippocratica* which the false diagnostick of our state physician has given to our trade in general? has he not heard of the iron works of such magnitude even in their cradle which are set up on the Carron, and which at the same time have drawn nothing from Sheffield, Birmingham, or Wolverhampton?

This might perhaps be enough to shew the entire falsity of the complaint concerning the decline of our manufactures. But every step we advance, this matter clears up more; and the false terrours of the author are dissipated, and fade away as the light appears. "The trade and manufactures of this country (says he) going to ruin, and a diminution of our *revenue from consumption* must attend the loss of so many seamen and artificers." Nothing more true than the general observation: nothing more false than its application to our circumstances. Let the revenue on consumption speak for itself:

| | |
|---|---|
| Average of net excise, since the new duties, three years ending 1767, - - | £.4,590,734 |
| Ditto before the new duties, three years ending 1759, - - - - | 3,261,694 |
| Average increase, | £.1,329,040 |

Here is no diminution. Here is, on the contrary, an immense increase. This is owing, I shall be told, to the new duties, which may increase the total bulk, but at the same time may make some diminution of the produce of the old. Were this the fact, it would be far from supporting the author's complaint. It might have proved that the burthen lay



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rather too heavy; but it would never prove that the *revenue from consumption* was impaired, which it was his business to do. But what is the real fact? Let us take, as the best instance for the purpose, the produce of the old hereditary and temporary excise granted in the reign of Charles the Second, whose object is that of most of the new impositions, from two averages, each of eight years.

| | |
|---|---|
| Average, first period, eight years, ending 1754, | £.525,317 |
| Ditto, second period, eight years ending 1767, | 538,542 |
| Increase, | £.13,225 |

I have taken these averages as including in each a war and a peace period; the first before the imposition of the new duties, the other since those impositions; and such is the state of the oldest branch of the revenue from consumption. Besides the acquisition of so much new, this article, to speak of no other, has rather increased under the pressure of all those additional taxes to which the author is pleased to attribute its destruction. But as the author has made his grand effort against those moderate, judicious, and necessary levies, which support all the dignity, the credit, and the power of his country, the reader will excuse a little further detail on this subject; that we may see how little oppressive those taxes are on the shoulders of the publick, with which he labours so earnestly to load its imagination. For this purpose we take the state of that specifick article upon which the two capital burthens of the war leaned the most immediately, by the additional duties on malt, and upon beer.

| | Barrels. |
|---|---|
| Average of strong beer, brewed in eight years before the additional malt and beer duties, | 3,895,059 |
| Average of strong beer, eight years since the duties, - - - - - - | 4,060,726 |
| Increase in the last period, | 165,667 |

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Here is the effect of two such daring taxes as 3*d.* by the bushel additional on malt, and 3*s.* by the barrel additional on beer. Two impositions laid without remission one upon the neck of the other; and laid upon an object which before had been immensely loaded. They did not in the least impair the consumption: it has grown under them. It appears that, upon the whole, the people did not feel so much inconvenience from the new duties as to oblige them to take refuge in the private brewery. Quite the contrary happened in both these respects in the reign of King William; and it happened from much slighter impositions.* No people can long consume a commodity for which they are not well able to pay. An enlightened reader laughs at the inconsistent chimera of our author, of a people universally luxurious, and at the same time oppressed with taxes and declining in trade. For my part, I cannot look on these duties as the author does. He sees nothing but the burthen. I can perceive the burthen as well as he; but I cannot avoid contemplating also the strength that supports it. From thence I draw the most comfortable assurances of the future vigour, and the ample resources, of this great misrepresented country; and can never prevail on myself to make complaints which have no cause, in order to raise hopes which have no foundation.

When a representation is built on truth and nature, one member supports the other, and mutual lights are given and received from every part. Thus, as our manufacturers have not deserted, nor the manufacture left us, nor the consumption declined, nor the revenue sunk; so neither has trade,

* Although the publick brewery has considerably increased in this latter period, the produce of the malt tax has been something less than in the former; this cannot be attributed to the new malt tax. Had this been the cause of the lessened consumption, the publick brewery, so much more burthened, must have felt it more. The cause of this diminution of the malt tax, I take to have been principally owing to the greater dearness of corn in the second period than in the first, which, in all its consequences, affected the people in the country much more than those in the towns. But the revenue from consumption was not on the whole impaired, as we have seen in the foregoing page.

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which is at once the result, measure, and cause of the whole, in the least decayed, as our author has thought proper sometimes to affirm, constantly to suppose, as if it were the most indisputable of all propositions. The reader will see below the comparative state of our trade* in three of the best years before our increase of debt and taxes, and with it the three last years since the author's date of our ruin.

In the last three years the whole of our exports was between 44 and 45 millions. In the three years preceding the war, it was no more than from 35 to 36 millions. The average balance of the former period was £.3,706,000; of the latter, something above four millions. It is true, that whilst the impressions of the author's destructive war continued, our trade was greater than it is at present. One of the necessary consequences of the peace was, that France must gradually recover a part of those markets of which she had been originally in possession. However, after all these deductions, still the gross trade in the worst year of the present is better than in the best year of any former period of

| * Total imports, value, | | Exports, ditto. |
|---|---|---|
| 1752. - | *L.*7,889,369 - | *L.*11,694,912 |
| 1753. - | 8,625,029 - | 12,243,604 |
| 1754. - | 8,093,472 - | 11,787,828 |
| Total, | *L.*24,607,870 - | 35,726,344 |
| | | 24,607,870 |
| | Exports exceed imports, | 11,118,474 |
| | Medium balance, | *L.*3,706,158 |
| 1764. - | 10,319,946 - | 16,164,532 |
| 1765. - | 10,889,742 - | 14,550,507 |
| 1766. - | 11,475,825 - | 14,024,964 |
| Total, | *L.*32,685,513 - | 44,740,003 |
| | | 32,685,513 |
| | Exports exceed, - | 12,054,490 |
| Medium balance for three last years, | | *L.*4,018,163 |

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peace. A very great part of our taxes, if not the greatest, has been imposed since the beginning of the century. On the author's principles, this continual increase of taxes must have ruined our trade, or at least entirely checked its growth. But I have a manuscript of Davenant, which contains an abstract of our trade for the years 1703 and 1704; by which it appears, that the whole export from England did not then exceed £.6,552,019. It is now considerably more than double that amount. Yet England was then a rich and flourishing nation.

The author endeavours to derogate from the balance in our favour as it stands on the entries, and reduces it from four millions as it there appears to no more than £.2,500,000. His observation on the looseness and inaccuracy of the export entries is just; and that the errour is always an errour of excess, I readily admit. But because, as usual, he has wholly omitted some very material facts, his conclusion is as erroneous as the entries he complains of.

On this point of the custom-house entries I shall make a few observations. 1st, The inaccuracy of these entries can extend only to FREE GOODS, that is, to such British products and manufactures, as are exported without drawback and without bounty; which do not in general amount to more than two-thirds at the very utmost of the whole export even of *our home products*. The valuable articles of corn, malt, leather, hops, beer, and many others, do not come under this objection of inaccuracy. The article of CERTIFICATE GOODS re-exported, a vast branch of our commerce, admits of no errour (except some smaller frauds which cannot be estimated,) as they have all a drawback of duty, and the exporter must therefore correctly specify their quantity and kind. The author therefore is not warranted from the known errour in some of the entries, to make a general defalcation from the whole balance in our favour. This errour cannot affect more than half, if so much, of the export article. 2dly, In the account made up at the inspector general's office, they estimate only the original cost of British products as they are here purchased; and on foreign goods, only the prices in the country from whence they are sent. This was

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the method established by Mr. Davenant; and, as far as it goes, it certainly is a good one. But the profits of the merchant at home, and of our factories abroad, are not taken into the account: which profit on such an immense quantity of goods exported and re-exported cannot fail of being very great: five *per cent.* upon the whole, I should think a very moderate allowance. 3dly, It does not comprehend the advantage arising from the employment of 600,000 tons of shipping, which must be paid by the foreign consumer, and which, in many bulky articles of commerce, is equal to the value of the commodity. This can scarcely be rated at less than a million annually. 4thly, The whole import from Ireland and America, and from the West Indies, is set against us in the ordinary way of striking a balance of imports and exports; whereas the import and export are both our own. This is just as ridiculous, as to put against the general balance of the nation, how much more goods Cheshire receives from London, than London from Cheshire. The whole revolves and circulates through this kingdom, and is, so far as it regards our profit, in the nature of home trade, as much as if the several countries of America and Ireland were all pieced to Cornwall. The course of exchange with all these places is fully sufficient to demonstrate that this kingdom has the whole advantage of their commerce. When the final profit upon a whole system of trade rests and centers in a certain place, a balance struck in that place merely on the mutual sale of commodities is quite fallacious. 5thly, The custom-house entries furnish a most defective, and indeed ridiculous idea, of the most valuable branch of trade we have in the world, that with Newfoundland. Observe what you export thither; a little spirits, provision, fishing lines, and fishing hooks. Is this *export* the true idea of the Newfoundland trade in the light of a beneficial branch of commerce? nothing less. Examine our imports from thence; it seems, upon this vulgar idea of exports and imports, to turn the balance against you. But your exports to Newfoundland are your own goods. Your import is your own food; as much your own, as that you raise with your ploughs out of your own soil; and not your loss, but your

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gain; your riches, not your poverty. But so fallacious is this way of judging, that neither the export nor import, nor both together, supply any idea approaching to adequate of that branch of business. The vessels in that trade go straight from Newfoundland to the foreign market; and the sale there, not the import here, is the measure of its value. That trade, which is one of your greatest and best, is hardly so much as seen in the custom-house entries; and it is not of less annual value to this nation than £.400,000. 6thly, The quality of your imports must be considered as well as the quantity. To state the whole of the foreign import *as loss*, is exceedingly absurd. All the iron, hemp, flax, cotton, Spanish wool, raw silk, woollen and linen yarn, which we import, are by no means to be considered as the matter of a merely luxurious consumption; which is the idea too generally and loosely annexed to our import article. These above-mentioned are materials of industry, not of luxury, which are wrought up here, in many instances, to ten times, and more, of their original value. Even where they are not subservient to our exports, they still add to our internal wealth, which consists in the stock of useful commodities, as much as in gold and silver. In looking over the specifick articles of our export and import, I have often been astonished to see for how small a part of the supply of our consumption, either luxurious or convenient, we are indebted to nations properly foreign to us.

These considerations are entirely passed over by the author; they have been but too much neglected by most who have speculated on this subject. But they ought never to be omitted by those who mean to come to any thing like the true state of the British trade. They compensate, and they more than compensate, every thing which the author can cut off with any appearance of reason for the over-entry of British goods; and they restore to us that balance of four millions, which the author has thought proper on such a very poor and limited comprehension of the object to reduce to £.2,500,000.

In general this author is so circumstanced, that to support

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his theory he is obliged to assume his facts: and then, if you allow his facts, they will not support his conclusions. What if all he says of the state of this balance were true? did not the same objections always lie to custom-house entries? do they defalcate more from the entries of 1766 than from those of 1754? If they prove us ruined, we were always ruined. Some ravens have always indeed croaked out this kind of song. They have a malignant delight in presaging mischief, when they are not employed in doing it: they are miserable and disappointed at every instance of the publick prosperity. They overlook us like the malevolent being of the poet:

> ——————Tritonida conspicit arcem
> Ingeniis, opibusque, et festa pace virentem;
> Vixque tenet lacrymas quia nil lacrymabile cernit.

It is in this spirit that some have looked upon those accidents that cast an occasional damp upon trade. Their imaginations entail these accidents upon us in perpetuity. We have had some bad harvests. This must very disadvantageously affect the balance of trade, and the navigation of a people, so large a part of whose commerce is in grain. But, in knowing the cause, we are morally certain, that, according to the course of events, it cannot long subsist. In the three last years, we have exported scarcely any grain; in good years, that export hath been worth twelve hundred thousand pounds and more; in the two last years, far from exporting, we have been obliged to import to the amount perhaps of our former exportation. So that in this article the balance must be £.2,000,000 against us; that is, one million in the ceasing of gain, the other in the increase of expenditure. But none of the author's promises or projects could have prevented this misfortune; and, thank God, we do not want him or them to relieve us from it; although, if his friends should now come into power, I doubt not but they will be ready to take credit for any increase of trade or excise that may arise from the happy circumstance of a good harvest.

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This connects with his loud laments and melancholy prognostications concerning the high price of the necessaries of life and the products of labour. With all his others, I deny this fact; and I again call upon him to prove it. Take average and not accident, the grand and first necessary of life is cheap in this country; and that too as weighed, not against labour, which is its true counterpoise, but against money. Does he call the price of wheat at this day, between 32 and 40 shillings *per* quarter in London, dear?* He must know that fuel (an object of the highest order in the necessaries of life, and of the first necessity in almost every kind of manufacture) is in many of our provinces cheaper than in any part of the globe. Meat is on the whole not excessively dear, whatever its price may be at particular times and from particular accidents. If it has had any thing like an uniform rise, this enhancement may easily be proved not to be owing to the increase of taxes, but to uniform increase of consumption and of money. Diminish the latter, and meat in your markets will be sufficiently cheap in account, but much dearer in effect: because fewer will be in a condition to buy. Thus your apparent plenty will be real indigence. At present, even under temporary disadvantages, the use of flesh is greater here than any where else; it is continued without any interruption of Lents or meagre days; it is sustained and growing even with the increase of our taxes. But some have the art of converting even the signs of national prosperity into symptoms of decay and ruin. And our author, who so loudly disclaims popularity, never fails to lay hold of the most vulgar popular prejudices and humours, in hopes to captivate the crowd. Even those peevish dispositions which grow out of some transitory suffering, those passing clouds which float in our changeable atmosphere; are by him industriously figured into frightful shapes, in order first to terrify and then to govern the populace.

It was not enough for the author's purpose to give this

* It is dearer in some places, and rather cheaper in others; but it must soon all come to a level.



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false and discouraging picture of the state of his own country. It did not fully answer his end, to exaggerate her burthens, to depreciate her successes, and to vilify her character. Nothing had been done, unless the situation of France were exalted in proportion as that of England had been abased. The reader will excuse the citation I make at length from his book; he out-does himself upon this occasion. His confidence is indeed unparalleled, and altogether of the heroick cast:

"If our rival nations were in the same circumstances with ourselves, *the augmentation of our taxes would produce no ill consequences:* if we were obliged to raise our prices, they must, from the same causes, do the like, and could take no advantage by under-selling and under-working us. But the alarming consideration to Great Britain is, *that France is not in the same condition.* Her distresses, during the war, were great, but they were immediate; her want of credit, as has been said, compelled her to impoverish her people, by raising the greatest part of her supplies within the year; *but the burthens she imposed on them were, in a great measure, temporary, and must be greatly diminished by a few years of peace.* She could procure no considerable loans, therefore she has mortgaged no *such oppressive taxes as those Great Britain has imposed in perpetuity for payment of interest.* Peace must, therefore, soon re-establish her commerce and manufactures, especially as the comparative *lightness of taxes*, and the cheapness of living, in that country, must make France an asylum for British manufacturers and artificers." On this the author rests the merit of his whole system. And on this point I will join issue with him. If France is not at least in the *same condition*, even in that very condition which the author falsely represents to be ours, if the very reverse of his proposition be not true, then I will admit his State of the Nation to be just; and all his inferences from that state to be logical and conclusive. It is not surprising, that the author should hazard our opinion of his veracity. That is a virtue on which great statesmen do not perhaps pique themselves so much: but it is somewhat extraordina-

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ry, that he should stake on a very poor calculation of chances, all credit for care, for accuracy, and for knowledge of the subject of which he treats. He is rash and inaccurate, because he thinks he writes to a publick ignorant and inattentive. But he may find himself in that respect, as in many others, greatly mistaken.

In order to contrast the light and vigorous condition of France with that of England, weak, and sinking under her burthens, he states in his tenth page, that France had raised £.50,314,378 sterling *by taxes within the several years* from the year 1756 to 1762 both inclusive. An Englishman must stand aghast at such a representation: To find France able to *raise within the year* sums little inferiour to all that we were able even to *borrow* on interest with all the resources of the greatest and most established credit in the world! Europe was filled with astonishment when they saw England *borrow* in one year twelve millions. It was thought, and very justly, no small proof of national strength and financial skill, to find a fund for the payment of the interest upon this sum. The interest of this, computed with the one *per cent.* annuities, amounted only to £.600,000 a year. This, I say, was thought a surprising effort even of credit. But this author talks, as of a thing not worth proving, and but just worth observing, that France in one year raised sixteen times that sum without borrowing, and continued to raise sums not far from equal to it for several years together. Suppose some Jacob Henriques had proposed, in the year 1762, to prevent a perpetual charge on the nation by raising ten millions within the year. He would have been considered, not as a harsh financier, who laid a heavy hand on the publick; but as a poor visionary, who had run mad on supplies and taxes. They who know that the whole land tax of England, at 4*s.* in the pound, raises but two millions; will not easily apprehend that any such sums as the author has conjured up can be raised even in the most opulent nations. France owed a large debt, and was encumbered with heavy establishments, before that war. The author does not formally deny that she borrowed something in every year of its continuance; let him produce the

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funds for this astonishing annual addition to all her vast preceding taxes, an addition equal to the whole excise, customs, land and malt taxes of England taken together.

But what must be the reader's astonishment, perhaps his indignation, if he should find that this great financier has fallen into the most unaccountable of all errours, no less an errour than that of mistaking the *identical sums borrowed by France upon interest, for supplies raised within the year*. Can it be conceived that any man only entered into the first rudiments of finance should make so egregious a blunder; should write it, should print it; should carry it to a second edition: should take it not collaterally and incidentally, but lay it down as the corner-stone of his whole system, in such an important point as the comparative states of France and England? But it will be said, that it was his misfortune to be ill-informed. Not at all. A man of any loose general knowledge, and of the most ordinary sagacity, never could have been misinformed in so gross a manner; because he would have immediately rejected so wild and extravagant an account.

The fact is this: the credit of France, bad as it might have been, did enable her (not to raise within the year) but to *borrow* the very sums the author mentions; that is to say, 1,106,916,261 livres, making, in the author's computation, £.50,314,378. The credit of France was low; but it was not annihilated. She did not derive, as our author chooses to assert, any advantages from the debility of her credit. Its consequence was the natural one: she borrowed; but she borrowed upon bad terms, indeed on the most exorbitant usury.

In speaking of a foreign revenue, the very pretence to accuracy would be the most inaccurate thing in the world. Neither the author nor I can with certainty authenticate the information we communicate to the publick, nor in an affair of eternal fluctuation arrive at perfect exactness. All we can do, and this we may be expected to do, is to avoid gross errours and blunders of a capital nature. We cannot order the proper officer to lay the accounts before the house. But the reader must judge on the probability of the accounts

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we lay before him. The author speaks of France as raising her supplies for war by taxes within the year; and of her debt, as a thing scarcely worthy of notice. I affirm that she borrowed large sums in every year; and has thereby accumulated an immense debt. This debt continued after the war infinitely to embarrass her affairs; and to find some means for its reduction was then and has ever since been the first object of her policy. But she has so little succeeded in all her efforts, that the *perpetual* debt of France is at this hour little short of £.100,000,000 sterling; and she stands charged with at least 40,000,000 of English pounds on life-rents and tontines. The annuities paid at this day at the Hotel de Ville of Paris, which are by no means her sole payments of that nature, amount to 139,000,000 of livres, that is, to 6,318,000 pounds; besides *billets au porteur*, and various detached and unfunded debts, to a great amount, and which bear an interest.

At the end of the war, the interest payable on her debt amounted to upwards of seven millions sterling. M. de la Verdy, the last hope of the French finances, was called in, to aid in the reduction of an interest, so light to our author, so intolerably heavy upon those who are to pay it. After many unsuccessful efforts towards reconciling arbitrary reduction with publick credit, he was obliged to go the plain high road of power, and to impose a tax of 10 *per cent.* upon a very great part of the capital debt of that kingdom; and this measure of present ease, to the destruction of future credit, produced about £.500,000 a year which was carried to their *Caisse d'amortissement* or sinking fund. But so unfaithfully and unsteadily has this and all the other articles which compose that fund been applied to their purposes, that they have given the state but very little even of present relief, since it is known to the whole world that she is behindhand on every one of her establishments. Since the year 1763, there has been no operation of any consequence on the French finances: and in this enviable condition is France at present with regard to her debt.

Every body knows that the principal of the debt is but a name; the interest is the only thing which can distress a na-

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tion. Take this idea, which will not be disputed, and compare the interest paid by England with that paid by France:

| | |
|---|---|
| Interest paid by France, funded and unfunded, for perpetuity or on lives, after the tax of 10 *per cent.* - - - - - | £.6,500,000 |
| Interest paid by England, as stated by the author, p. 27 - - - - - - - | 4,600,000 |
| Interest paid by France exceeds that paid by England, - - - - - - | £.1,900,000 |

The author cannot complain, that I state the interest paid by England as too low. He takes it himself as the extremest term. Nobody who knows any thing of the French finances will affirm that I state the interest paid by that kingdom too high. It might be easily proved to amount to a great deal more: even this is near two millions above what is paid by England.

There are three standards to judge of the good condition of a nation with regard to its finances. 1st, The relief of the people. 2d, The equality of supplies to establishments. 3d, The state of publick credit. Try France on all these standards.

Although our author very liberally administers relief to the people of France, its government has not been altogether so gracious. Since the peace, she has taken off but a single *vingtieme*, or shilling in the pound, and some small matter in the capitation. But, if the government has relieved them in one point, it has only burthened them the more heavily in another. The *Taille*,* that grievous and destructive imposition, which all their financiers lament, without being able to remove or to replace, has been augmented no less than six millions of livres, or 270,000 pounds English. A further augmentation of this or other duties is now talked of; and it is certainly necessary to

* A tax rated by the intendant in each generality on the presumed fortune of every person below the degree of a gentleman.

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their affairs: so exceedingly remote from either truth or verisimilitude is the author's amazing assertion, *that the burthens of France in the war were in a great measure temporary, and must be greatly diminished by a few years of peace.*

In the next place, if the people of France are not lightened of taxes, so neither is the state disburthened of charges. I speak from very good information, that the annual income of that state is at this day 30 millions of livres, or £.1,350,000 sterling, short of a provision for their ordinary peace establishment; so far are they from the attempt or even hope to discharge any part of the capital of their enormous debt. Indeed under such extreme straitness and distraction labours the whole body of their finances, so far does their charge outrun their supply in every particular, that no man, I believe, who has considered their affairs with any degree of attention or information, but must hourly look for some extraordinary convulsion in that whole system; the effect of which on France, and even on all Europe, it is difficult to conjecture.

In the third point of view, their credit. Let the reader cast his eye on a table of the price of French funds, as they stood a few weeks ago, compared with the state of some of our English stocks, even in their present low condition:

| French. | | British. | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 5 *per cent.* - - | 63. | *Bank stock*, 5½ | 159 |
| 4 *per cent.* (not taxed) | 57. | 4 *per cent.* cons. | 100 |
| 3 *per cent.* ditto - | 49. | 3 *per cent.* cons. | 88 |

This state of the funds of France and England is sufficient to convince even prejudice and obstinacy, that if France and England are not in the same condition (as the author affirms they are not) the difference is infinitely to the disadvantage of France. This depreciation of their funds has not much the air of a nation lightening burthens and discharging debts.

Such is the true comparative state of the two kingdoms in those capital points of view. Now as to the nature of the

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taxes which provide for this debt, as well as for their ordinary establishments, the author has thought proper to affirm that "they are comparatively light;" that "she has mortgaged no such oppressive taxes as ours:" his effrontery on this head is intolerable. Does the author recollect a single tax in England to which something parallel in nature, and as heavy in burthen, does not exist in France; does he not know that the lands of the noblesse are still under the load of the greater part of the old feudal charges, from which the gentry of England have been relieved for upwards of 100 years, and which were in kind, as well as burthen, much worse than our modern land tax? Besides that all the gentry of France serve in the army on very slender pay, and to the utter ruin of their fortunes; all those who are not noble, have their lands heavily taxed. Does he not know that wine, brandy, soap, candles, leather, salt-petre, gunpowder, are taxed in France? Has he not heard that government in France has made a monopoly of that great article of *salt?* that they compel the people to take a certain quantity of it, and at a certain rate, both rate and quantity fixed at the arbitrary pleasure of the imposer?* that they pay in France the *Taille*, an arbitrary imposition on presumed property? that a tax is laid in fact and name, on the same arbitrary standard, upon the acquisitions of their *industry?* and that in France a heavy *capitation-tax* is also paid, from the highest to the very poorest sort of people? have we taxes of such weight, or any thing at all of the compulsion, in the article of *salt?* do we pay any *taillage*, any *faculty-tax*, any *industry-tax?* do we pay any *capitation-tax* whatsoever? I believe the people of London would fall into an agony to hear of such taxes proposed upon them as are paid at Paris. There is not a single article of provision for man or beast, which enters that great city, and is not excised; corn, hay, meal, butcher's-meat, fish, fowls, every thing. I do

* Before the war it was sold to, or rather forced on, the consumer at 11 sous, or about 5*d.* the pound. What it is at present, I am not informed. Even this will appear no trivial imposition. In London, salt may be had at a penny farthing per pound from the last retailer.

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not here mean to censure the policy of taxes laid on the consumption of great luxurious cities. I only state the fact. We should be with difficulty brought to hear of a tax of 50*s.* upon every ox sold in Smithfield. Yet this tax is paid in Paris. Wine, the lower sort of wine, little better than English small beer, pays 2*d.* a bottle. We indeed tax our beer: but the imposition on small beer is very far from heavy. In no part of England are eatables of any kind the object of taxation. In almost every other country in Europe they are excised, more or less. I have by me the state of the revenues of many of the principal nations on the continent; and, on comparing them with ours, I think I am fairly warranted to assert, that England is the most lightly taxed of any of the great states of Europe. They whose unnatural and sullen joy arises from a contemplation of the distresses of their country, will revolt at this position. But if I am called upon, I will prove it beyond all possibility of dispute; even though this proof should deprive these gentlemen of the singular satisfaction of considering their country as undone; and though the best civil government, the best constituted, and the best managed revenue that ever the world beheld, should be thoroughly vindicated from their perpetual clamours and complaints. As to our neighbour and rival France, in addition to what I have here suggested, I say, and when the author chooses formally to deny, I shall formally prove it, that her subjects pay more than England, on a computation of the wealth of both countries; that her taxes are more injudiciously and more oppressively imposed; more vexatiously collected; come in a smaller proportion to the royal coffers, and are less applied by far to the public service. I am not one of those who choose to take the author's word for this happy and flourishing condition of the French finances, rather than attend to the changes, the violent pushes and the despair of all her own financiers. Does he choose to be referred for the easy and happy condition of the subject in France to the remonstrances of their own parliaments, written with such an eloquence, feeling, and energy as I have not seen exceeded in any other writings? The author may say, their complaints are exaggerated, and



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the effects of faction. I answer, that they are the representations of numerous, grave, and most respectable bodies of men, upon the affairs of their own country. But, allowing that discontent and faction may pervert the judgment of such venerable bodies in France, we have as good a right to suppose that the same causes may full as probably have produced from a private, however respectable person, that frightful, and, I trust I have shewn groundless representation of our own affairs in England.

The author is so conscious of the dangerous effects of that representation, that he thinks it necessary, and very necessary it is, to guard against them. He assures us, "that he has not made that display of the difficulties of his country, to expose her counsels to the ridicule of other states, or to provoke a vanquished enemy to insult her; nor to excite the people's rage against their governours, or sink them into a despondency of the publick welfare." I readily admit this apology for his intentions. God forbid I should think any man capable of entertaining so execrable and senseless a design. The true cause of his drawing so shocking a picture is no more than this; and it ought rather to claim our pity than excite our indignation; he finds himself out of power; and this condition is intolerable to him. The same sun which gilds all nature, and exhilarates the whole creation, does not shine upon disappointed ambition. It is something that rays out of darkness, and inspires nothing but gloom and melancholy. Men in this deplorable state of mind, find a comfort in spreading the contagion of their spleen. They find an advantage too; for it is a general popular errour to imagine the loudest complainers for the publick to be the most anxious for its welfare. If such persons can answer the ends of relief and profit to themselves, they are apt to be careless enough about either the means or the consequences.

Whatever this complainant's motives may be, the effects can by no possibility be other than those which he so strongly, and I hope truly, disclaims all intention of producing. To verify this, the reader has only to consider how dreadful a picture he has drawn in his 32d page of the state of this kingdom; such a picture as, I believe, has hardly been ap-

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plicable, without some exaggeration, to the most degenerate and undone commonwealth that ever existed. Let this view of things be compared with the prospect of a remedy which he proposes in the page directly opposite and the subsequent. I believe no man living could have imagined it possible, except for the sake of burlesquing a subject, to propose remedies so ridiculously disproportionate to the evil, so full of uncertainty in their operation, and depending for their success in every step upon the happy event of so many new, dangerous, and visionary projects. It is not amiss, that he has thought proper to give the publick some little notice of what they may expect from his friends, when our affairs shall be committed to their management. Let us see how the accounts of disease and remedy are balanced in his State of the Nation. In the first place, on the side of evils, he states, "an impoverished and heavily burthened publick. A declining trade and decreasing specie. The power of the crown never so much extended over the great; but the great without influence over the lower sort. Parliament losing its reverence with the people. The voice of the multitude set up against the sense of the legislature; a people luxurious and licentious, impatient of rule, and despising all authority. Government relaxed in every sinew, and a corrupt selfish spirit pervading the whole. An opinion of many, that the form of government is not worth contending for. No attachment in the bulk of the people towards the constitution. No reverence for the customs of our ancestors. No attachment but to private interest, nor any zeal but for selfish gratifications. Trade and manufactures going to ruin. Great Britain in danger of becoming tributary to France, and the descent of the crown dependent on her pleasure. Ireland, in case of a war, to become a prey to France; and Great Britain, unable to recover Ireland, cede it by treaty (the author never can think of a treaty without making cessions), in order to purchase peace for herself. The colonies left exposed to the ravages of a domestick, or the conquest of a foreign enemy."—Gloomy enough, God knows. The author well observes,* *that a mind not totally devoid of feel-*

* P. 31.

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*ing cannot look upon such a prospect without horrour; and an heart capable of humanity must be unable to bear its description.* He ought to have added, that no man of common discretion ought to have exhibited it to the publick, if it were true; or of common honesty, if it were false.

But now for the comfort; the day-star which is to arise in our hearts; the author's grand scheme for totally reversing this dismal state of things, and making us "happy at home and respected abroad, formidable in war and flourishing in peace."*

In this great work he proceeds with a facility equally astonishing and pleasing. Never was financier less embarrassed by the burthen of establishments, or with the difficulty of finding ways and means. If an establishment is troublesome to him, he lops off at a stroke just as much of it as he chooses. He mows down, without giving quarter, or assigning reason, army, navy, ordnance, ordinary, extraordinaries; nothing can stand before him. Then, when he comes to provide, Amalthea's horn is in his hands; and he pours out with an inexhaustible bounty, taxes, duties, loans, and revenues, without uneasiness to himself, or burthen to the publick. Insomuch that, when we consider the abundance of his resources, we cannot avoid being surprised at his extraordinary attention to savings. But it is all the exuberance of his goodness.

This book has so much of a certain tone of power, that one would be almost tempted to think it written by some person who had been high in office. A man is generally rendered somewhat a worse reasoner for having been a minister. In private, the assent of listening and obsequious friends; in publick, the venal cry and prepared vote of a passive senate, confirm him in habits of begging the question with impunity, and asserting without thinking himself obliged to prove. Had it not been for some such habits, the author could never have expected that we should take his estimate for a peace establishment solely on his word.

* P. 33.

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This estimate which he gives,* is the great groundwork of his plan for the national redemption; and it ought to be well and firmly laid, or what must become of the superstructure? One would have thought the natural method in a plan of reformation would be, to take the present existing estimates as they stand; and then to shew what may be practicably and safely defalcated from them. This would, I say, be the natural course; and what would be expected from a man of business. But this author takes a very different method. For the ground of his speculation of a present peace establishment, he resorts to a former speculation of the same kind, which was in the mind of the minister of the year 1764. Indeed it never existed any where else.† "The plan," says he, with his usual ease, "has been already formed, and the outline drawn, by the administration of 1764. I shall attempt to fill up the void and obliterated parts, and trace its operation. The standing expense of the present (his projected) peace establishment, *improved by the experience of the two last years, may be thus estimated;*" and he estimates it at £.3,468,161.

Here too it would be natural to expect some reasons for condemning the subsequent actual establishments, which have so much transgressed the limits of his plan of 1764, as well as some arguments in favour of his new project; which has in some articles exceeded, in others fallen short, but on the whole is much below his old one. Hardly a word on any of these points, the only points however that are in the least essential; for unless you assign reasons for the increase or diminution of the several articles of publick charge, the playing at establishments and estimates is an amusement of no higher order, and of much less ingenuity, than *Questions and commands*, or *What is my thought like?* To bring more distinctly under the reader's view this author's strange method of proceeding, I will lay before him the three schemes; *viz.* the idea of the ministers in 1764, the actual estimates of the two last years as given

* P. 33. † P. 33.

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by the author himself, and lastly the new project of his political millennium:

| | |
|---|---|
| Plan of establishment for 1764, as by Considerations, p. 43, - - - | *£.3,609,700 |
| Medium of 1767 and 1768, as by State of the Nation, p. 29 and 30, - - | 3,919,375 |
| Present peace establishment, as by the project in State of the Nation, p. 33, - | 3,468,161 |

It is not from any thing our author has any where said, that you are enabled to find the ground, much less the justification, of the immense difference between these several systems: you must compare them yourself, article by article; no very pleasing employment, by the way, to compare the agreement or disagreement of two chimeras. I now only speak of the comparison of his own two projects. As to the latter of them, it differs from the former, by having some of the articles diminished, and others increased.† I find the chief article of reduction arises from the smaller deficiency of land and malt, and of the annuity funds, which he brings down to £.295,561 in his new estimate, from £.502,400, which he had allowed for those articles in the Considerations. With this *reduction*, owing, as it must be, merely to a smaller deficiency of funds, he has nothing at all to do. It can be no work and no merit of his. But with regard to the *increase*, the matter is very different. It is all his own; the publick is loaded (for any thing we can see to the contrary) entirely *gratis*. The chief articles of the increase are on the navy,‡ and on the army and ordnance extraordinaries; the navy being estimated in his *State of the Nation* £.50,000 a year more, and the army and ordnance extraordinaries £.40,000 more, than he had thought proper to allow for them in that estimate in his *Con-*

* The figures in the Considerations are wrong cast up; it should be *L.* 3,608,700.

† Considerations, p. 43. State of the Nation, p. 33.

‡ Ibid. ibid.

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*siderations*, which he makes the foundation of his present project. He has given no sort of reason, stated no sort of necessity, for this additional allowance, either in the one article or the other. What is still stronger, he admits that his allowance for the army and ordnance extras is too great, and expressly refers you to the *Considerations*;* where, far from giving £.75,000 a year to that service as the *State of the Nation* has done, the author apprehends his own scanty provision of £.35,000 to be by far too considerable, and thinks it may well admit of further reductions.† Thus, according to his own principles, this great œconomist falls into a vicious prodigality; and is as far in his estimate from a consistency with his own principles as with the real nature of the services.

Still, however, his present establishment differs from its

* P. 34.

† The author of the State of the Nation, p. 34, informs us, that the sum of *L.*75,000, allowed by him for the extras of the army and ordnance, is far less than was allowed for the same service in the years 1767 and 1768. It is so undoubtedly, and by at least *L.*200,000. He sees that he cannot abide by the plan of the Considerations in this point, nor is he willing wholly to give it up. Such an enormous difference as that between *L.*35,000 and *L.*300,000 puts him to a stand. Should he adopt the latter plan, of increased expense, he must then confess that he had, on a former occasion, egregiously trifled with the publick; at the same time all his future promises of reduction must fall to the ground. If he stuck to the *L.*35,000, he was sure that every one must expect from him some account how this monstrous charge came to continue ever since the war, when it was clearly unnecessary; how all those successions of ministers (his own included) came to pay it, and why his great friend in Parliament, and his partisans without doors, came not to pursue to ruin, at least to utter shame, the authors of so groundless and scandalous a profusion. In this strait he took a middle way; and, to come nearer the real state of the service, he outbid the Considerations, at one stroke, *L.*40,000; at the same time he hints to you, that you may *expect* some benefit also from the original plan. But the author of the Considerations will not suffer him to escape it. He has pinned him down to his *L.*35,000; for that is the sum he has chosen, not as what he thinks will probably be required, but as making the most ample allowance for every possible contingency. See that author, p. 42 and 43.

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archetype of 1764, by being, though raised in particular parts, upon the whole about £.141,000 smaller. It is improved, he tells us, by the experience of the two last years. One would have concluded that the peace establishment of these two years had been less than that of 1764, in order to suggest to the author his improvements, which enabled him to reduce it. But how does that turn out?

| | |
|---|---|
| Peace establishment* 1767 and 1768, medium, | £.3,919,375 |
| Ditto, estimate in the Considerations, for 1764, | 3,609,700 |
| Difference - | £.309,675 |

A vast increase instead of diminution. The experience then of the two last years ought naturally to have given the idea of an heavier establishment; but this writer is able to diminish by increasing, and to draw the effects of subtraction from the operations of addition. By means of these new powers, he may certainly do whatever he pleases. He is indeed moderate enough in the use of them, and condescends to settle his establishments at £.3,468,161 a year.

However, he has not yet done with it; he has further ideas of saving, and new resources of revenue. These additional savings are principally two: 1st, *It is to be hoped*,† says he, that the sum of £.250,000 (which in the estimate he allows for the deficiency of land and malt) will be less by £.37,924.‡

* He has done great injustice to the establishment of 1768; but I have not here time for this discussion; nor is it necessary to this argument.

† P. 34.

‡ In making up this account, he falls into a surprising errour of arithmetick. "The deficiency of the land-tax in the year 1754 and 1755,* when it was at 2*s*. amounted to no more, on a medium, than *L*.49,372; to which, if we add *half the sum*, it will give us *L*.79,058 as the peace deficiency at 3*s*.

| | |
|---|---|
| Total, - - - - | *L*.49,372 |
| Add the half, - - - | 24,686 |
| | *L*.74,058 |

* P. 33.

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2d, That the sum of £.20,000 allowed for the Foundling Hospital, and £.1,800 for American surveys, will soon cease to be necessary, as the services will be completed.

What follows with regard to the resources,* is very well worthy the reader's attention. "Of this estimate," says he, "upwards of £.300,000 will be for the plantation service; and that sum, *I hope*, the people of Ireland and the colonies *might be induced* to take off Great Britain, and defray between them, in the proportion of £.200,000 by the colonies, and £.100,000 by Ireland."

Such is the whole of this mighty scheme. Take his reduced estimate, and his further reductions, and his resources all together, and the result will be; He will *certainly* lower the provision made for the navy. He will cut off largely (God knows what or how) from the army and ordnance extraordinaries. He may be *expected* to cut off more. He *hopes* that the deficiencies on land and malt will be less than usual; and he *hopes* that America and Ireland might be *induced* to take off £.300,000 of our annual charges.

If any of these Hopes, Mights, Insinuations, Expectations and Inducements, should fail him, there will be a formidable gaping breach in his whole project. If all of them should fail, he has left the nation without a glimmering of hope in this thick night of terrours which he has thought fit to spread about us. If every one of them, which, attended with success, would signify any thing to our revenue, can have no effect but to add to our distractions and dangers, we shall be if possible in a still worse condition from his projects of cure than he represents us from our original disorders.

Before we examine into the consequences of these schemes, and the probability of these savings, let us suppose them all real and all safe, and then see what it is they amount to, and how he reasons on them:

Which he makes *L.*79,058. This is indeed in disfavour of his argument; but we shall see that he has ways, by other errours, of reimbursing himself.

* P. 34.



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| | |
|---|---|
| Deficiency on land and malt, less by | £.37,000 |
| Foundling Hospital - - - | 20,000 |
| American surveys, - - - - | 1,800 |
| | £.58,800 |

This is the amount of the only articles of saving he specifies; and yet he chooses to assert "that we may venture on the credit of them to reduce the standing expenses of the estimate (from £.3,468,161) to £.3,300,000;"* that is, for a saving of £.58,000, he is not ashamed to take credit for a defalcation from his own ideal establishment in a sum of no less than £.168,161! Suppose even that we were to take up the estimate of the Considerations (which is however abandoned in the State of the Nation), and reduce his £.75,000 extraordinaries to the original £.35,000, still all these savings joined together give us but £.98,800; that is, near £.70,000 short of the credit he calls for, and for which he has neither given any reason, nor furnished any data whatsoever for others to reason upon.

Such are his savings, as operating on his own project of a peace establishment. Let us now consider them as they affect the existing establishment and our actual services. He tells us, the sum allowed in his estimate for the navy is "£.69,321 less than the grant for that service in 1767; but in that grant £.30,000 was included for the purchase of hemp, and a saving of about £.25,000 was made in that year." The author has got some secret in arithmetick. These two sums put together amount, in the ordinary way of computing, to £.55,000, and not to £.69,321. On what principle has he chosen to take credit for £.14,321 more? To what this strange inaccuracy is owing, I cannot possibly comprehend; nor is it very material, where the logick is so bad, and the policy so erroneous, whether the arithmetick be just or otherwise. But in a scheme for making this nation "happy at home and respected abroad, formidable in war and flourishing in peace," it is surely a little unfortunate for

* P. 43.

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us, that he has picked out the *Navy*, as the very first object of his œconomical experiments. Of all the publick services, that of the navy is the one in which tampering may be of the greatest danger, which can worst be supplied upon an emergency, and of which any failure draws after it the longest and heaviest train of consequences. I am far from saying, that this or any service ought not to be conducted with œconomy. But I will never suffer the sacred name of œconomy to be bestowed upon arbitrary defalcation of charge. The author tells us himself, "that to suffer the navy to rot in harbour for want of repairs and marines, would be to invite destruction." It would be so. When the author talks therefore of savings on the navy estimate, it is incumbent on him to let us know, not what sums he will cut off, but what branch of that service he deems superfluous. Instead of putting us off with unmeaning generalities, he ought to have stated what naval force, what naval works, and what naval stores, with the lowest estimated expense, are necessary to keep our marine in a condition commensurate to its great ends. And this too not for the contracted and deceitful space of a single year, but for some reasonable term. Every body knows that many charges cannot be in their nature regular or annual. In the year 1767 a stock of hemp, &c. was to be laid in; that charge intermits, but it does not end. Other charges of other kinds take their place. Great works are now carrying on at Portsmouth, but not of greater magnitude than utility; and they must be provided for. A year's estimate is therefore no just idea at all of a permanent peace establishment. Had the author opened this matter upon these plain principles, a judgment might have been formed, how far he had contrived to reconcile national defence with publick œconomy. Till he has done it, those who had rather depend on any man's reason than the greatest man's authority, will not give him credit on this head, for the saving of a single shilling. As to those savings which are already made, or in course of being made, whether right or wrong, he has nothing at all to do with them; they can be no part of his project, considered as a plan of reformation. I great-

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ly fear that the errour has not lately been on the side of profusion.

Another head is the saving on the army and ordnance extraordinaries, particularly in the American branch. What or how much reduction may be made, none of us, I believe, can with any fairness pretend to say; very little, I am convinced. The state of America is extremely unsettled; more troops have been sent thither; new dispositions have been made; and this augmentation of number, and change of disposition, has rarely, I believe, the effect of lessening the bill for extraordinaries, which, if not this year, yet in the next we must certainly feel. Care has not been wanting to introduce œconomy into that part of the service. The author's great friend has made, I admit, some regulations; his immediate successors have made more and better. This part will be handled more ably and more minutely at another time: but no one can cut down this bill of extraordinaries at his pleasure. The author has given us nothing, but his word, for any certain or considerable reduction; and this we ought to be the more cautious in taking, as he has promised great savings in his *Considerations*, which he has not chosen to abide by in his *State of the Nation*.

On this head also of the American extraordinaries, he can take credit for nothing. As to his next, the lessening of the deficiency of the land and malt tax, particularly of the malt tax; any person the least conversant in that subject cannot avoid a smile. This deficiency arises from charge of collection, from anticipation, and from defective produce. What has the author said on the reduction of any head of this deficiency upon the land tax? On these points he is absolutely silent. As to the deficiency on the malt tax, which is chiefly owing to a defective produce, he has, and can have nothing to propose. If this deficiency should be lessened by the increase of malting in any years more than in others, (as it is a greatly fluctuating object), how much of this obligation shall we owe to this author's ministry? will it not be the case under any administration? must it not go to the general service of the year, in some way or other, let the finances be in whose hands they will? But why take credit

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for so extremely reduced a deficiency at all? I can tell him he has no rational ground for it in the produce of the year 1767; and I suspect will have full as little reason from the produce of the year 1768. That produce may indeed become greater, and the deficiency of course will be less. It may too be far otherwise. A fair and judicious financier will not, as this writer has done, for the sake of making out a specious account, select a favourable year or two, at remote periods, and ground his calculations on those. In 1768 he will not take the deficiencies of 1753 and 1754 for his standard. Sober men have hitherto (and must continue this course, to preserve this character) taken indifferently the mediums of the years immediately preceding. But a person who has a scheme from which he promises much to the publick ought to be still more cautious; he should ground his speculation rather on the lowest mediums; because all new schemes are known to be subject to some defect or failure not foreseen; and which therefore every prudent opposer will be ready to allow for, in order to lay his foundation as low and as solid as possible. Quite contrary is the practice of some politicians. They first propose savings, which they well know cannot be made, in order to get a reputation for œconomy. In due time they assume another, but a different method, by providing for the service they had before cut off or straitened, and which they can then very easily prove to be necessary. In the same spirit they raise magnificent ideas of revenue on funds which they know to be insufficient. Afterwards, who can blame them, if they do not satisfy the publick desires? They are great artificers; but they cannot work without materials.

These are some of the little arts of great statesmen. To such we leave them, and follow where the author leads us, to his next resource, the Foundling Hospital. Whatever particular virtue there is in the mode of this saving, there seems to be nothing at all new, and indeed nothing wonderfully important in it. The sum annually voted for the support of the Foundling Hospital has been in a former parliament limited to the establishment of the children then in

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the hospital. When they are apprenticed, this provision will cease. It will therefore fall in more or less at different times; and will at length cease entirely. But, until it does, we cannot reckon upon it as the saving on the establishment of any given year: nor can any one conceive how the author comes to mention this, any more than some other articles, as a part of a *new* plan of œconomy which is to retrieve our affairs. This charge will indeed cease in its own time. But will no other succeed to it? Has he ever known the publick free from some contingent charge, either for the just support of royal dignity, or for national magnificence, or for publick charity, or for publick service? does he choose to flatter his readers that no such will ever return? or does he in good earnest declare, that let the reason, or necessity, be what they will, he is resolved not to provide for such services?

Another resource of œconomy yet remains, for he gleans the field very closely, £.1,800 for the American surveys. Why what signifies a dispute about trifles? he shall have it. But while he is carrying it off, I shall just whisper in his ear, that neither the saving that is allowed, nor that which is doubted of, can at all belong to that future proposed administration, whose touch is to cure all our evils. Both the one and the other belong equally (as indeed all the rest do) to the present administration, to any administration; because they are the gift of time, and not the bounty of the exchequer.

I have now done with all the minor preparatory parts of the author's scheme, the several articles of saving which he proposes. At length comes the capital operation, his new resources. Three hundred thousand pounds a year from America and Ireland.—Alas! alas! if that too should fail us, what will become of this poor undone nation? The author, in a tone of great humility, *hopes* they may be induced to pay it. Well, if that be all, we may hope so too: and for any light he is pleased to give us into the ground of this hope, and the ways and means of this inducement, here is a speedy end both of the question and the revenue.

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It is the constant custom of this author, in all his writings, to take it for granted, that he has given you a revenue, whenever he can point out to you where you may have money, if you can contrive how to get at it; and this seems to be the master-piece of his financial ability. I think, however, in his way of proceeding, he has behaved rather like an harsh step-dame, than a kind nursing mother to his country. Why stop at £.300,000? If his state of things be at all founded, America and Ireland are much better able to pay £.600,000, than we are to satisfy ourselves with half that sum. However, let us forgive him this one instance of tenderness towards Ireland and the colonies.

He spends a vast deal of time,* in an endeavour to prove, that Ireland is able to bear greater impositions. He is of opinion, that the poverty of the lower class of people there is, in a great measure, owing to *a want* of judicious taxes; that a land tax will enrich her tenants; that taxes are paid in England which are not paid there; that the colony trade is increased above £.100,000 since the peace; that she *ought* to have further indulgence in that trade; and ought to have further privileges in the woollen manufacture. From these premises, of what she has, what she has not, and what she ought to have, he infers that Ireland will contribute £.100,000 towards the extraordinaries of the American establishment.

I shall make no objections whatsoever, logical or financial, to this reasoning: many occur; but they would lead me from my purpose, from which I do not intend to be diverted, because it seems to me of no small importance. It will be just enough to hint, what I dare say many readers have before observed, that when any man proposes new taxes in a country with which he is not personally conversant by residence or office, he ought to lay open its situation much more minutely and critically than this author has done, or than perhaps he is able to do. He ought not to content himself with saying that a single article of her trade is increased £.100,000 a year; he ought, if he argues from the increase

* P. 35.

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of trade to the increase of taxes, to state the whole trade, and not one branch of trade only; he ought to enter fully into the state of its remittances, and the course of its exchange; he ought likewise to examine whether all its establishments are increased or diminished; and whether it incurs or discharges debts annually. But I pass over all this; and am content to ask a few plain questions.

Does the author then seriously mean to propose in parliament a land tax, or any tax for £.100,000 a year upon Ireland? If he does, and if fatally, by his temerity and our weakness, he should succeed; then I say he will throw the whole empire from one end of it to the other into mortal convulsions. What is it that can satisfy the furious and perturbed mind of this man; is it not enough for him that such projects have alienated our colonies from the mother country, and not to propose violently to tear our sister kingdom also from our side, and to convince every dependent part of the empire, that, when a little money is to be raised, we have no sort of regard to their ancient customs, their opinions, their circumstances, or their affections? He has however a *douceur* for Ireland in his pocket; benefits in trade by opening the woollen manufacture to that nation. A very right idea in my opinion; but not more strong in reason, than likely to be opposed by the most powerful and most violent of all local prejudices and popular passions. First, a fire is already kindled by his schemes of taxation in America; he then proposes one which will set all Ireland in a blaze; and his way of quenching both is by a plan which may kindle perhaps ten times a greater flame in Britain.

Will the author pledge himself, previously to his proposal of such a tax, to carry this enlargement of the Irish trade; if he does not, then the tax will be certain; the benefit will be less than problematical. In this view, his compensation to Ireland vanishes into smoke; the tax, to their prejudices, will appear stark naked in the light of an act of arbitrary power and oppression. But, if he should propose the benefit and tax together, then the people of Ireland, a very high and spirited people, would think it the worst bargain in the

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world. They would look upon the one as wholly vitiated and poisoned by the other; and, if they could not be separated, would infallibly resist them both together. Here would be taxes indeed, amounting to an handsome sum; £.100,000 very effectually voted, and passed through the best and most authentick forms; but how to be collected?—This is his perpetual manner. One of his projects depends for success upon another project, and this upon a third, all of them equally visionary. His finance is like the Indian philosophy; his earth is poised on the horns of a bull, his bull stands upon an elephant, his elephant is supported by a tortoise; and so on for ever.

As to his American £.200,000 a year, he is satisfied to repeat gravely, as he has done an hundred times before, that the Americans are able to pay it. Well, and what then? does he lay open any part of his plan how they may be compelled to pay it, without plunging ourselves into calamities that outweigh tenfold the proposed benefit? or does he shew how they may be induced to submit to it quietly? or does he give any satisfaction concerning the mode of levying it, in commercial colonies one of the most important and difficult of all considerations? Nothing like it. To the stamp act, whatever its excellencies may be, I think he will not in reality recur, or even choose to assert that he means to do so, in case his minister should come again into power. If he does, I will predict that some of the fastest friends of that minister will desert him upon this point. As to port duties, he has damned them all in the lump, by declaring them "contrary to the first principles of colonization, and not less prejudicial to the interests of Great Britain than to those of the colonies."* Surely this single observation of his ought to have taught him a little caution; he ought to have bugun to doubt, whether there is not something in the nature of commercial colonies, which renders them an unfit object of taxation; when port duties, so large a fund of revenue in all countries, are by himself found, in this case, not only improper, but destructive. However he has here pret-

* P. 37.



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ty well narrowed the field of taxation. Stamp act, hardly to be resumed. Port duties, mischievous. Excises, I believe, he will scarcely think worth the collection (if any revenue should be so) in America. Land tax (notwithstanding his opinion of its immense use to agriculture,) he will not directly propose, before he has thought again and again on the subject. Indeed he very readily recommends it for Ireland, and seems to think it not improper for America; because, he observes, they already raise most of their taxes internally, including this tax. A most curious reason truly! because their lands are already heavily burthened, he thinks it right to burthen them still further. But he will recollect, for surely he cannot be ignorant of it, that the lands of America are not, as in England, let at a rent certain in money, and therefore cannot, as here, be taxed at a certain pound rate. They value them in gross among themselves; and none but themselves in their several districts can value them. Without their hearty concurrence and co-operation, it is evident, we cannot advance a step in the assessing or collecting any land tax. As to the taxes which in some places the Americans pay by the acre, they are merely duties of regulation: they are small; and to increase them, notwithstanding the secret virtues of a land tax, would be the most effectual means of preventing that cultivation they are intended to promote. Besides, the whole country is heavily in arrear already for land taxes and quit rents. They have different methods of taxation in the different provinces, agreeable to their several local circumstances. In New England by far the greatest part of their revenue is raised by *faculty taxes* and *capitations*. Such is the method in many others. It is obvious that parliament, unassisted by the colonies themselves, cannot take so much as a single step in this mode of taxation. Then what tax is it he will impose? Why, after all the boasting speeches and writings of his faction for these four years, after all the vain expectations which they have held out to a deluded publick, this their great advocate, after twisting the subject every way, after writhing himself in every posture, after knocking at every door, is obliged fairly to abandon every mode of taxation whatsoever in America.

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He thinks* it the best method for parliament to impose the sum, and reserve the account to itself, leaving the mode of taxation to the colonies. But how and in what proportion? what does the author say? O, not a single syllable on this the most material part of the whole question. Will he, in parliament, undertake to settle the proportions of such payments from Nova Scotia to Nevis, in no fewer than six and twenty different countries, varying in almost every possible circumstance one from another? if he does, I tell him, he adjourns his revenue to a very long day. If he leaves it to themselves to settle these proportions, he adjourns it to doomsday.

Then what does he get by this method on the side of acquiescence? will the people of America relish this course, of giving and granting and applying their money, the better because their assemblies are made commissioners of the taxes? This is far worse than all his former projects; for here, if the assemblies shall refuse, or delay, or be negligent, or fraudulent, in this new-imposed duty, we are wholly without remedy; and neither our custom-house officers, nor our troops, nor our armed ships can be of the least use in the collection. No idea can be more contemptible (I will not call it an oppressive one, the harshness is lost in the folly) than that of proposing to get any revenue from the Americans but by their freest and most cheerful consent. Most monied men know their own interest right well; and are as able as any financier, in the valuation of risks. Yet I think this financier will scarcely find that adventurer hardy enough, at any premium, to advance a shilling upon a vote of such taxes. Let him name the man or set of men, that would do it. This is the only proof of the value of revenues; what would an interested man rate them at? His subscription would be at ninety-nine *per cent.* discount the very first day of its opening. Here is our only national security from ruin; a security upon which no man in his senses would venture a shilling of his fortune. Yet he puts down those articles as gravely in his supply for the peace

* P. 37, 38.

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establishment, as if the money had been all fairly lodged in the exchequer.

| | |
|---|---|
| American revenue, - | £.200,000 |
| Ireland, - - - | 100,000 |

Very handsome indeed! but if supply is to be got in such a manner, farewell the lucrative mystery of finance! If you are to be credited for savings, without shewing how, why, or with what safety, they are to be made; and for revenues, without specifying on what articles, or by what means, or at what expense, they are to be collected; there is not a clerk in a publick office who may not outbid this author, or his friend, for the department of chancellor of the exchequer; not an apprentice in the city, that will not strike out, with the same advantages, the same, or a much larger, plan of supply.

Here is the whole of what belongs to the author's scheme for saving us from impending destruction. Take it even in its most favourable point of view, as a thing within possibility; and imagine what must be the wisdom of this gentleman, or his opinion of ours, who could first think of representing this nation in such a state, as no friend can look upon but with horrour, and scarce an enemy without compassion, and afterwards of diverting themselves with such inadequate, impracticable, puerile methods for our relief? If these had been the dreams of some unknown, unnamed, and nameless writer, they would excite no alarm; their weakness had been an antidote to their malignity. But as they are universally believed to be written by the hand, or what amounts to the same thing, under the immediate direction, of a person who has been in the management of the highest affairs, and may soon be in the same situation, I think it is not to be reckoned amongst our greatest consolations, that the yet remaining power of this kingdom is to be employed in an attempt to realize notions that are at once so frivolous, and so full of danger. That consideration will justify me in dwelling a little longer on the difficulties of the nation, and the solutions of our author.

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I am then persuaded that he cannot be in the least alarmed about our situation, let his outcry be what he pleases. I will give him a reason for my opinion, which, I think, he cannot dispute. All that he bestows upon the nation, which it does not possess without him, and supposing it all sure money, amounts to no more than a sum of £.300,000 a year. This, he thinks, will do the business completely, and render us flourishing at home, and respectable abroad. If the option between glory and shame, if our salvation or destruction, depended on this sum, it is impossible that he should have been active, and made a merit of that activity, in taking off a shilling in the pound of the land tax, which came up to his grand desideratum, and upwards of £.100,000 more. By this manœuvre, he left our trade, navigation, and manufactures, on the verge of destruction, our finances in ruin, our credit expiring, Ireland on the point of being ceded to France, the colonies of being torn to pieces, the succession of the crown at the mercy of our great rival, and the kingdom itself on the very point of becoming tributary to that haughty power. All this for want of £.300,000; for I defy the reader to point out any other revenue, or any other precise and defined scheme of politicks, which he assigns for our redemption.

I know that two things may be said in his defence, as bad reasons are always at hand in an indifferent cause; that he was not sure the money would be applied as he thinks it ought to be, by the present ministers. I think as ill of them as he does to the full. They have done very near as much mischief as they can do, to a constitution so robust as this is. Nothing can make them more dangerous, but that, as they are already in general composed of his disciples and instruments, they may add to the publick calamity of their own measures, the adoption of his projects. But be the ministers what they may, the author knows that they could not avoid applying this £.450,000 to the service of the establishment, as faithfully as he, or any other minister, could do. I say they could not avoid it, and have no merit at all for the application. But supposing that they should greatly mismanage this revenue. Here is a good deal of room for

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mistake and prodigality before you come to the edge of ruin. The difference between the amount of that real and his imaginary revenue is, £150,000 a year, at least; a tolerable sum for them to play with: this might compensate the difference between the author's œconomy and their profusion; and still, notwithstanding their vices and ignorance, the nation might be saved. The author ought also to recollect, that a good man would hardly deny, even to the worst of ministers, the means of doing their duty; especially in a crisis when our being depended on supplying them with some means or other. In such a case their penury of mind, in discovering resources, would make it rather the more necessary, not to strip such poor providers of the little stock they had in hand.

Besides, here is another subject of distress, and a very serious one, which puts us again to a stand. The author may possibly not come into power (I only state the possibility:) he may not always continue in it; and if the contrary to all this should fortunately for us happen, what insurance on his life can be made for a sum adequate to his loss? Then we are thus unluckily situated, that the *chance* of an American and Irish revenue of £300,000 to be managed by him, is to save us from ruin two or three years hence at best, to make us happy at home and glorious abroad; and the actual possession of £.400,000 English taxes cannot so much as protract our ruin without him. So we are staked on four chances; his power, its permanence, the success of his projects, and the duration of his life. Any one of these failing, we are gone. *Propria hæc si donna fuissent!* This is no unfair representation; ultimately all hangs on his life, because, in his account of every set of men that have held or supported administration, he finds neither virtue nor ability in any but himself. Indeed he pays (through their measures) some compliments to Lord Bute and Lord Despenser. But to the latter, this is, I suppose, but a civility to old acquaintance: to the former, a little stroke of politicks. We may therefore fairly say, that our only hope is his life; and he has, to make it the more so, taken care to cut off any resource which we possessed independent of him.

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In the next place it may be said, to excuse any appearance of inconsistency between the author's actions and his declarations, that he thought it right to relieve the landed interest, and lay the burthen where it ought to lie, on the colonies. What! to take off a revenue so necessary to our being, before any thing whatsoever was acquired in the place of it? In prudence, he ought to have waited at least for the first quarter's receipt of the new anonymous American revenue, and Irish land tax. Is there something so specifick for our disorders in American, and something so poisonous in English money, that one is to heal, the other to destroy us? To say that the landed interest *could* not continue to pay it for a year or two longer, is more than the author will attempt to prove. To say that they *would* pay it no longer, is to treat the landed interest, in my opinion, very scurvily. To suppose that the gentry, clergy, and freeholders of England do not rate the commerce, the credit, the religion, the liberty, the independency of their country, and the succession of their crown, at a shilling in the pound land tax! They never gave him reason to think so meanly of them. And, if I am rightly informed, when that measure was debated in parliament, a very different reason was assigned by the author's great friend, as well as by others, for that reduction: one very different from the critical and almost desperate state of our finances. Some people then endeavoured to prove, that the reduction might be made without detriment to the national credit, or the due support of a proper peace establishment; otherwise it is obvious that the reduction could not be defended in argument. So that this author cannot despair so much of the commonwealth, without this American and Irish revenue, as he pretends to do. If he does, the reader sees how handsomely he has provided for us, by voting away one revenue, and by giving us a pamphlet on the other.

I do not mean to blame the relief which was then given by parliament to the land. It was grounded on very weighty reasons. The administration contended only for its continuance for a year, in order to have the merit of taking off the shilling in the pound immediately before the elections;

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and thus to bribe the freeholders of England with their own money.

It is true, the author, in his estimate of ways and means, takes credit for £.400,000 a year, *Indian revenue*. But he will not very positively insist, that we should put this revenue to the account of his plans or his power; and for a very plain reason: we are already near two years in possession of it. By what means we came to that possession, is a pretty long story; however, I shall give nothing more than a short abstract of the proceeding, in order to see whether the author will take to himself any part in that measure.

The fact is this; the East India company had for a good while solicited the ministry for a negociation, by which they proposed to pay largely for some advantages in their trade, and for the renewal of their charter. This had been the former method of transacting with that body. Government having only leased the monopoly for short terms, the company has been obliged to resort to it frequently for renewals. These two parties had always negociated (on the true principle of credit) not as government and subject, but as equal dealers, on the footing of mutual advantage. The publick had derived great benefit from such dealing. But at that time new ideas prevailed. The ministry, instead of listening to the proposals of that company, chose to set up a claim of the crown to their possessions. The original plan seems to have been, to get the house of commons to compliment the crown with a sort of juridical declaration of a title to the company's acquisitions in India; which the crown, on its part, with the best air in the world, was to bestow upon the publick. Then it would come to the turn of the house of commons again to be liberal and grateful to the crown. The civil list debts were to be paid off; with perhaps a pretty augmentation of income. All this was to be done on the most publick-spirited principles, and with a politeness and mutual interchange of good offices, that could not but have charmed. But what was best of all, these civilities were to be without a farthing of charge to either of the kind and obliging parties.—The East India company

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was to be covered with infamy and disgrace, and at the same time was to pay the whole bill.

In consequence of this scheme, the terrours of a parliamentary inquiry were hung over them. A judicature was asserted in parliament to try this question. But lest this judicial character should chance to inspire certain stubborn ideas of law and right, it was argued, that the judicature was arbitrary, and ought not to determine by the rules of law, but by their opinion of policy and expediency. Nothing exceeded the violence of some of the managers, except their impotence. They were bewildered by their passions, and by their want of knowledge or want of consideration of the subject. The more they advanced, the further they found themselves from their object.—All things ran into confusion. The ministers quarrelled among themselves. They disclaimed one another. They suspended violence, and shrunk from treaty. The inquiry was almost at its last gasp; when some active persons of the company were given to understand, that this hostile proceeding was only set up *in terrorem;* that government was far from an intention of seizing upon the possessions of the company. Administration, they said, was sensible, that the idea was in every light full of absurdity; and that such a seizure was not more out of their power, than remote from their wishes; and therefore, if the company would come in a liberal manner to the house, they certainly could not fail of putting a speedy end to this disagreeable business, and of opening the way to an advantageous treaty.

On this hint the company acted: they came at once to a resolution of getting rid of the difficulties which arose from the complication of their trade with their revenue; a step which despoiled them of their best defensive armour, and put them at once into the power of administration. They threw their whole stock of every kind, the revenue, the trade, and even their debt from government, into one fund, which they computed on the surest grounds would amount to £.800,000, with a large probable surplus for the payment of debt. Then they agreed to divide this sum in equal portions between themselves and the publick, £.400,000



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to each. This gave to the proprietors of that fund an annual augmentation of no more than £.80,000 dividend. They ought to receive from government £.120,000 for the loan of their capital. So that, in fact, the whole, which on this plan they reserved to themselves, from their vast revenues, from their extensive trade, and in consideration of the great risks and mighty expenses which purchased these advantages, amounted to no more than £.280,000, whilst government was to receive, as I said, £.400,000.

This proposal was thought by themselves liberal indeed; and they expected the highest applauses for it. However, their reception was very different from their expectations. When they brought up their plan to the house of commons, the offer, as it was natural, of £.400,000, was very well relished. But nothing could be more disgustful than the £.80,000 which the company had divided amongst themselves. A violent tempest of publick indignation and fury rose against them. The heads of people turned. The company was held well able to pay £.400,000 a year to government; but bankrupts, if they attempted to divide the fifth part of it among themselves. An *ex post facto* law was brought in with great precipitation, for annulling this dividend. In the bill was inserted a clause, which suspended for about a year the right, which, under the publick faith, the company enjoyed, of making their own dividends. Such was the disposition and temper of the house, that although the plain face of facts, reason, arithmetick, all the authority, parts, and eloquence in the kingdom, were against this bill; though all the chancellors of the exchequer, who had held that office from the beginning of this reign, opposed it; yet a few place-men of the subordinate departments sprung out of their ranks, took the lead, and, by an opinion *of some sort of secret support*, carried the bill with a high hand, leaving the then secretary of state and the chancellor of the exchequer in a very moderate minority. In this distracted situation, the managers of the bill, notwithstanding their triumph, did not venture to propose the payment of the civil list debt. The chancellor of the exchequer was not in good humour

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enough, after his late defeat by his own troops, to co-operate in such a design; so they made an act, to lock up the money in the exchequer until they should have time to look about them, and settle among themselves what they were to do with it.

Thus ended this unparalleled transaction. The author, I believe, will not claim any part of the glory of it: he will leave it whole and entire to the authors of the measure. The money was the voluntary free gift of the company; the rescinding bill was the act of legislature, to which they and we owe submission: the author has nothing to do with the one or with the other. However, he cannot avoid rubbing himself against this subject merely for the pleasure of stirring controversies, and gratifying a certain pruriency of taxation that seems to infect his blood. It is merely to indulge himself in speculations of taxing, that he chooses to harangue on this subject. For he takes credit for no greater sum than the publick is already in possession of. He does not hint that the company means, or has ever shewn any disposition, if managed with common prudence, to pay less in future; and he cannot doubt that the present ministry are as well inclined to drive them by their mock inquiries, and real rescinding bills, as he can possibly be with his taxes. Besides, it is obvious, that as great a sum might have been drawn from that company, without affecting property, or shaking the constitution, or endangering the principle of publick credit, or running into his golden dreams of cockets on the Ganges, or visions of stamp duties on *Perwanna's*, *Dusticks*, *Kistbundees*, and *Husbulhookums*. For once, I will disappoint him in this part of the dispute; and only in a very few words recommend to his consideration, how he is to get off the dangerous idea of taxing a publick fund, if he levies those duties in England; and if he is to levy them in India, what provision he has made for a revenue establishment there; supposing that he undertakes this new scheme of finance independently of the company, and against its inclinations.

So much for these revenues; which are nothing but his visions, or already the national possessions without any act

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of his. It is easy to parade with a high talk of parliamentary rights, of the universality of legislative powers, and of uniform taxation. Men of sense, when new projects come before them, always think a discourse proving the mere right or mere power of acting in the manner proposed, to be no more than a very unpleasant way of mis-spending time. They must see the object to be of proper magnitude to engage them; they must see the means of compassing it to be next to certain; the mischiefs not to counterbalance the profit; they will examine how a proposed imposition or regulation agrees with the opinion of those who are likely to be affected by it; they will not despise the consideration even of their habitudes and prejudices. They wish to know how it accords or disagrees with the true spirit of prior establishments, whether of government or of finance; because they well know, that in the complicated œconomy of great kingdoms, and immense revenues, which in a length of time, and by a variety of accidents, have coalesced into a sort of body, an attempt towards a compulsory equality in all circumstances, and an exact practical definition of the supreme rights in every case, is the most dangerous and chimerical of all enterprises. The old building stands well enough, though part Gothick, part Grecian, and part Chinese, until an attempt is made to square it into uniformity. Then it may come down upon our heads all together, in much uniformity of ruin; and great will be the fall thereof. Some people, instead of inclining to debate the matter, only feel a sort of nausea, when they are told, that "protection calls for supply," and that "all the parts ought to contribute to the support of the whole." Strange argument for great and grave deliberation! As if the same end may not, and must not, be compassed, according to its circumstances, by a great diversity of ways. Thus in Great Britain some of our establishments are apt for the support of credit. They stand therefore upon a principle of their own, distinct from, and in some respects contrary to, the relation between prince and subject. It is a new species of contract superinduced upon the old contract of the state. The idea of power must as much as possible be banished from it; for power and credit

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are things adverse, incompatible; *Non bene conveniunt, nec in una sede morantur.* Such establishments are our great *monied* companies. To tax them would be critical and dangerous, and contradictory to the very purpose of their institution; which is credit, and cannot therefore be taxation. But the nation, when it gave up that power, did not give up the advantage; but supposed, and with reason, that government was overpaid in credit, for what it seemed to lose in authority. In such a case to talk of the rights of sovereignty, is quite idle. Other establishments supply other modes of publick contribution. Our *trading* companies, as well as individual importers, are a fit subject of revenue by customs. Some establishments pay us by a *monopoly* of their consumption and their produce. This, nominally no tax, in reality comprehends all taxes. Such establishments are our colonies. To tax them would be as erroneous in policy, as rigorous in equity. Ireland supplies us by furnishing troops in war; and by bearing part of our foreign establishment in peace. She aids us at all times by the money that her absentees spend amongst us; which is no small part of the rental of that kingdom. Thus Ireland contributes her part. Some objects bear port duties. Some are fitter for an inland excise. The mode varies, the object is the same. To strain these from their old and inveterate leanings, might impair the old benefit, and not answer the end of the new project. Among all the great men of antiquity, *Procrustes* shall never be my hero of legislation; with his iron bed, the allegory of his government, and the type of some modern policy, by which the long limb was to be cut short, and the short tortured into length. Such was the state-bed of uniformity! He would, I conceive, be a very indifferent farmer, who complained that his sheep did not plough, or his horses yield him wool, though it would be an idea full of equality. They may think this right in rustick œconomy, who think it available in the politick;

> Qui Bavium non odit, amet tua carmina, Mævi!
> Atque idem jungat vulpes, et mulgeat hircos.

As the author has stated this Indian taxation for no visi-

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ble purpose relative to his plan of supply; so he has stated many other projects with as little, if any distinct end; unless perhaps to shew you how full he is of projects for the publick good; and what vast expectations may be formed of him or his friends, if they should be translated into administration. It is also from some opinion that these speculations may one day become our publick measures, that I think it worth while to trouble the reader at all about them.

Two of them stand out in high relievo beyond the rest. The first is a change in the internal representation of this country, by enlarging our number of constituents. The second is an addition to our representatives, by new American members of Parliament. I pass over here all considerations how far such a system will be an improvement of our constitution according to any sound theory. Not that I mean to condemn such speculative inquiries concerning this great object of the national attention. They may tend to clear doubtful points, and possibly may lead, as they have often done, to real improvements. What I object to, is their introduction into a discourse relating to the immediate state of our affairs, and recommending plans of practical government. In this view, I see nothing in them but what is usual with the author; an attempt to raise discontent in the people of England, to balance those discontents the measures of his friends had already raised in America. What other reason can he have for suggesting, that we are not happy enough to enjoy a sufficient number of voters in England? I believe that most sober thinkers on this subject are rather of opinion, that our fault is on the other side; and that it would be more in the spirit of our constitution, and more agreeable to the pattern of our best laws, by lessening the number, to add to the weight and independency of our voters. And truly, considering the immense and dangerous charge of elections; the prostitute and daring venality, the corruption of manners, the idleness and profligacy of the lower sort of voters, no prudent man would propose to increase such an evil, if it be, as I fear it is, out of our power to administer to it any remedy. The author proposes nothing further. If

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he has any improvements that may balance or may lessen this inconvenience, he has thought proper to keep them as usual in his own breast. Since he has been so reserved, I should have wished he had been as cautious with regard to the project itself. First, because he observes justly, that his scheme, however it might improve the platform, can add nothing to the authority of the legislature; much, I fear, it will have a contrary operation: for, authority depending on opinion at least as much as on duty, an idea circulated among the people that our constitution is not so perfect as it ought to be, before you are sure of mending it, is a certain method of lessening it in the publick opinion. Of this irreverent opinion of Parliament, the author himself complains in one part of his book; and he endeavours to increase it in the other.

Has he well considered what an immense operation any change in our constitution is? how many discussions, parties, and passions, it will necessarily excite; and, when you open it to inquiry in one part, where the inquiry will stop? Experience shews us, that no time can be fit for such changes but a time of general confusion; when good men, finding every thing already broken up, think it right to take advantage of the opportunity of such derangement in favour of an useful alteration. Perhaps a time of the greatest security and tranquillity both at home and abroad may likewise be fit; but will the author affirm this to be just such a time? Transferring an idea of military to civil prudence, he ought to know how dangerous it is to make an alteration of your disposition in the face of an enemy.

Now comes his American representation. Here too, as usual, he takes no notice of any difficulty, nor says any thing to obviate those objections that must naturally arise in the minds of his readers. He throws you his politicks as he does his revenue; do you make something of them if you can. Is not the reader a little astonished at the proposal of an American representation from that quarter? It is proposed merely as a project* of speculative improvement; not from the necessity in the case, not to add any thing to the

* P. 39, 40.

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authority of parliament, but that we may afford a greater attention to the concerns of the Americans, and give them a better opportunity of stating their grievances, and of obtaining redress. I am glad to find the author has at length discovered that we have not given a sufficient attention to their concerns, or a proper redress to their grievances. His great friend would once have been exceedingly displeased with any person, who should tell him, that he did not attend sufficiently to those concerns. He thought he did so, when he regulated the colonies over and over again: he thought he did so, when he formed two general systems of revenue; one of port-duties, and the other of internal taxation. These systems supposed, or ought to suppose, the greatest attention to, and the most detailed information of, all their affairs. However, by contending for the American representation, he seems at last driven virtually to admit, that great caution ought to be used in the exercise of *all* our legislative rights over an object so remote from our eye, and so little connected with our immediate feelings; that in prudence we ought not to be quite so ready with our taxes, until we can secure the desired representation in Parliament. Perhaps it may be some time before this hopeful scheme can be brought to perfect maturity, although the author seems to be no wise aware of any obstructions that lie in the way of it. He talks of his union, just as he does of his taxes and his savings, with as much *sang froid* and ease, as if his wish and the enjoyment were exactly the same thing. He appears not to have troubled his head with the infinite difficulty of settling that representation on a fair balance of wealth and numbers throughout the several provinces of America and the West Indies, under such an infinite variety of circumstances. It costs him nothing to fight with nature, and to conquer the order of Providence, which manifestly opposes itself to the possibility of such a parliamentary union.

But let us, to indulge his passion for projects and power, suppose the happy time arrived, when the author comes into the ministry, and is to realize his speculations. The writs are issued for electing members for America and the West Indies. Some provinces receive them in six weeks, some in

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ten, some in twenty. A vessel may be lost, and then some provinces may not receive them at all. But let it be, that they all receive them at once, and in the shortest time. A proper space must be given for proclamation and for the election; some weeks at least. But the members are chosen; and, if ships are ready to sail, in about six more they arrive in London. In the mean time the parliament has sat, and business far advanced, without American representatives. Nay by this time, it may happen, that the parliament is dissolved; and then the members ship themselves again, to be again elected. The writs may arrive in America, before the poor members of a parliament in which they never sat, can arrive at their several provinces. A new interest is formed, and they find other members are chosen whilst they are on the high seas. But, if the writs and members arrive together, here is at best a new trial of skill amongst the candidates, after one set of them have well aired themselves with their two voyages of 6,000 miles.

However, in order to facilitate every thing to the author, we will suppose them all once more elected, and steering again to old England, with a good heart, and a fair westerly wind in their stern. On their arrival, they find all in a hurry and bustle; in and out; condolence and congratulation; the crown is demised. Another parliament is to be called. Away back to America again on a fourth voyage, and to a third election. Does the author mean to make our kings as immortal in their personal as in their politick character? or, whilst he bountifully adds to their life, will he take from them their prerogative of dissolving parliaments, in favour of the American union? or are the American representatives to be perpetual, and to feel neither demises of the crown, nor dissolutions of parliament?

But these things may be granted to him, without bringing him much nearer to his point. What does he think of re-election? is the American member the only one who is not to take a place, or the only one to be exempted from the ceremony of re-election? How will this great politician preserve the rights of electors, the fairness of returns, and the privilege of the house of commons, as the sole judge of



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such contests? It would undoubtedly be a glorious sight to have eight or ten petitions, or double returns, from Boston and Barbadoes, from Philadelphia and Jamaica, the members returned, and the petitioners, with all their train of attorneys, solicitors, mayors, select men, provost-marshals, and above five hundred or a thousand witnesses, come to the bar of the house of commons. Possibly we might be interrupted in the enjoyment of this pleasing spectacle, if a war should break out, and our constitutional fleet, loaded with members of parliament, returning officers, petitions, and witnesses, the electors and elected, should become a prize to the French or Spaniards, and be conveyed to Carthagena or to La Vera Cruz, and from thence perhaps to Mexico or Lima, there to remain until a cartel for members of parliament can be settled, or until the war is ended.

In truth, the author has little studied this business; or he might have known, that some of the most considerable provinces of America, such for instance as Connecticut and Massachusetts Bay, have not in each of them two men who can afford, at a distance from their estates, to spend a thousand pounds a year. How can these provinces be represented at Westminster? If their province pays them, they are American agents, with salaries, and not independent members of parliament. It is true, that formerly in England members had salaries from their constituents; but they all had salaries, and were all, in this way, upon a par. If these American representatives have no salaries, then they must add to the list of our pensioners and dependants at court, or they must starve. There is no alternative.

Enough of this visionary union; in which much extravagance appears without any fancy, and the judgment is shocked without any thing to refresh the imagination. It looks as if the author had dropped down from the moon, without any knowledge of the general nature of this globe, of the general nature of its inhabitants, without the least acquaintance with the affairs of this country. Governor Pownal has handled the same subject. To do him justice, he treats it upon far more rational principles of speculation; and much more like a man of business. He thinks (erroneously, I

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conceive; but he does think) that our legislative rights are incomplete without such a representation. It is no wonder, therefore, that he endeavours by every means to obtain it. Not like our author, who is always on velvet, he is aware of some difficulties; and he proposes some solutions. But nature is too hard for both these authors; and America is, and ever will be, without actual representation in the house of commons; nor will any minister be wild enough even to propose such a representation in parliament; however he may choose to throw out that project, together with others equally far from his real opinions and remote from his designs, merely to fall in with the different views, and captivate the affections, of different sorts of men.

Whether these projects arise from the author's real political principles, or are only brought out in subservience to his political views, they compose the whole of any thing that is like precise and definite, which the author has given us to expect from that administration which is so much the subject of his praises and prayers. As to his general propositions, that "there is a deal of difference between impossibilities and great difficulties;" that "a great scheme cannot be carried, unless made the business of successive administrations;" that "virtuous and able men are the fittest to serve their country; all this I look on as no more than so much rubble to fill up the spaces between the regular masonry. Pretty much in the same light I cannot forbear considering his detached observations on commerce; such as, that "the system for colony regulations would be very simple, and mutually beneficial to Great Britain and her colonies, if the old navigation laws were adhered to."* That "the transportation should be in all cases in ships belonging to British subjects." That "even British ships should not be *generally* received into the colonies from any part of Europe, except the dominions of Great Britain." That "it is unreasonable that corn and such like products should be restrained to come first to a British port." What do all these fine observations signify? Some of them condemn, as ill practices, things that were

* P. 39.

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never practised at all. Some recommend to be done, things that always have been done. Others indeed convey, though obliquely and loosely, some insinuations highly dangerous to our commerce. If I could prevail on myself to think the author meant to ground any practice upon these general propositions, I should think it very necessary to ask a few questions about some of them. For instance, what does he mean by talking of an adherence to the old navigation laws? does he mean, that the particular law, 12 Car. II. c. 19, commonly called, "The Act of Navigation," is to be adhered to, and that the several subsequent additions, amendments, and exceptions, ought to be all repealed? If so, he will make a strange havock in the whole system of our trade laws, which have been universally acknowledged to be full as well founded in the alterations and exceptions, as the act of Charles the Second in the original provisions; and to pursue full as wisely the great end of that very politick law, the increase of the British navigation. I fancy the writer could hardly propose any thing more alarming to those immediately interested in that navigation than such a repeal. If he does not mean this, he has got no farther than a nugatory proposition, which nobody can contradict, and for which no man is the wiser.

That "the regulations for the colony trade would be few and simple if the old navigation-laws were adhered to," I utterly deny as a fact. That they ought to be so, sounds well enough; but this proposition is of the same nugatory nature with some of the former. The regulations for the colony trade ought not to be more nor fewer, nor more nor less complex, than the occasion requires. And, as that trade is in a great measure a system of art and restriction, they can neither be few nor simple. It is true, that the very principle may be destroyed, by multiplying to excess the means of securing it. Never did a minister depart more from the author's ideas of simplicity, or more embarrass the trade of America with the multiplicity and intricacy of regulations and ordinances, than his boasted minister of 1764. That minister seemed to be possessed with something, hardly short of a rage, for regulation and restriction. He had so multi-

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plied bonds, certificates, affidavits, warrants, sufferances, and cockets; had supported them with such severe penalties, and extended them without the least consideration of circumstances to so many objects, that, had they all continued in their original force, commerce must speedily have expired under them. Some of them, the ministry which gave them birth was obliged to destroy: with their own hand they signed the condemnation of their own regulations; confessing, in so many words, in the preamble of their act of the 5th Geo. III. that some of these regulations had laid *an unnecessary restraint on the trade and correspondence of his Majesty's American subjects.* This, in that ministry, was a candid confession of a mistake: but every alteration made in those regulations by their successours is to be the effect of envy, and American misrepresentation. So much for the author's simplicity in regulation.

I have now gone through all which I think immediately essential in the author's idea of war, of peace, of the comparative states of England and France, of our actual situation; in his projects of œconomy, of finance, of commerce, and of constitutional improvement. There remains nothing now to be considered, except his heavy censures upon the administration which was formed in 1765; which is commonly known by the name of the Marquis of Rockingham's administration, as the administration which preceded it is by that of Mr. Grenville. These censures relate chiefly to three heads: 1. To the repeal of the American stamp act. 2. To the commercial regulations then made. 3. To the course of foreign negotiations during that short period.

A person who knew nothing of publick affairs but from the writings of this author would be led to conclude, that, at the time of the change in June 1765, some well-digested system of administration, founded in national strength, and in the affections of the people, proceeding in all points with the most reverential and tender regard to the laws, and pursuing with equal wisdom and success every thing which could tend to the internal prosperity, and to the external honour and dignity of this country, had been all at once subverted, by an irruption of a sort of wild, licentious, un-

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principled invaders, who wantonly, and with a barbarous rage, had defaced a thousand fair monuments of the constitutional and political skill of their predecessors. It is natural indeed that this author should have some dislike to the administration which was formed in 1765. Its views in most things were different from those of his friends; in some, altogether opposite to them. It is impossible that both of these administrations should be the objects of publick esteem. Their different principles compose some of the strongest political lines which discriminate the parties even now subsisting amongst us. The ministers of 1764 are not indeed followed by very many in their opposition: yet a large part of the people now in office entertain, or pretend to entertain, sentiments entirely conformable to theirs; whilst some of the former colleagues of the ministry which was formed in 1765, however they may have abandoned the connexion, and contradicted by their conduct the principles of their former friends, pretend, on their parts, still to adhere to the same maxims. All the lesser divisions, which are indeed rather names of personal attachment than of party distinction, fall in with the one or the other of these leading parties.

I intend to state, as shortly as I am able, the general condition of publick affairs, and the disposition of the minds of men, at the time of the remarkable change of system in 1765. The reader will have thereby a more distinct view of the comparative merits of these several plans, and will receive more satisfaction concerning the ground and reason of the measures which were then pursued, than, I believe, can be derived from the perusal of those partial representations contained in the State of the Nation, and the other writings of those who have continued, for now near three years, in the undisturbed possession of the press. This will, I hope, be some apology for my dwelling a little on this part of the subject.

On the resignation of the Earl of Bute, in 1763, our affairs had been delivered into the hands of three ministers of his recommendation; Mr. Grenville, the Earl of Egremont, and the Earl of Halifax. This arrangement, notwithstand-

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ing the retirement of Lord Bute, announced to the publick a continuance of the same measures; nor was there more reason to expect a change from the death of the Earl of Egremont. The Earl of Sandwich supplied his place. The Duke of Bedford, and the gentlemen who act in that connexion, and whose general character and politicks were sufficiently understood, added to the strength of the ministry, without making any alteration in their plan of conduct. Such was the constitution of the ministry which was changed in 1765.

As to their politicks, the principles of the peace of Paris governed in foreign affairs. In domestick, the same scheme prevailed, of contradicting the opinions, and disgracing most of the persons, who had been countenanced and employed in the late reign. The inclinations of the people were little attended to; and a disposition to the use of forcible methods ran through the whole tenour of administration. The nation in general was uneasy and dissatisfied. Sober men saw causes for it, in the constitution of the ministry and the conduct of the ministers. The ministers, who have usually a short method on such occasions, attributed their unpopularity wholly to the efforts of faction. However this might be, the licentiousness and tumults of the common people, and the contempt of government, of which our author so often and so bitterly complains, as owing to the mismanagement of the subsequent administrations, had at no time risen to a greater or more dangerous height. The measures taken to suppress that spirit were as violent and licentious as the spirit itself; injudicious, precipitate, and some of them illegal. Instead of allaying, they tended infinitely to inflame the distemper; and whoever will be at the least pains to examine, will find those measures, not only the causes of the tumults which then prevailed, but the real sources of almost all the disorders which have arisen since that time. More intent on making a victim to party than an example of justice, they blundered in the method of pursuing their vengeance. By this means a discovery was made of many practices, common indeed in the office of secretary of state, but wholly repugnant to our laws, and the genius of the English

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constitution. One of the worst of these was, the wanton and indiscriminate seizure of papers, even in cases where the safety of the state was not pretended in justification of so harsh a proceeding. The temper of the ministry had excited a jealousy, which made the people more than commonly vigilant concerning every power which was exercised by government. The abuse, however sanctioned by custom, was evident; but the ministry, instead of resting in a prudent inactivity, or (what would have been still more prudent) taking the lead, in quieting the minds of the people, and ascertaining the law upon those delicate points, made use of the whole influence of government to prevent a parliamentary resolution against these practices of office. And lest the colourable reasons, offered in argument against this parliamentary procedure, should be mistaken for the real motives of their conduct, all the advantage of privilege, all the arts and finenesses of pleading, and great sums of publick money were lavished, to prevent any decision upon those practices in the courts of justice. In the mean time, in order to weaken, since they could not immediately destroy, the liberty of the press, the privilege of parliament was voted away in all accusations for a seditious libel. The freedom of debate in parliament itself was no less menaced. Officers of the army, of long and meritorious service, and of small fortunes, were chosen as victims for a single vote, by an exertion of ministerial power, which had been very rarely used, and which is extremely unjust, as depriving men not only of a place, but a profession, and is indeed of the most pernicious example both in a civil and a military light.

Whilst all things were managed at home with such a spirit of disorderly despotism; abroad there was a proportionable abatement of all spirit. Some of our most just and valuable claims were in a manner abandoned. This indeed seemed not very inconsistent conduct in the ministers who had made the treaty of Paris. With regard to our domestick affairs, there was no want of industry; but there was a great deficiency of temper and judgment, and manly comprehension of the publick interest. The nation certainly wanted relief, and government attempted to administer it. Two

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ways were principally chosen for this great purpose. The first by regulation; the second by new funds of revenue. Agreeably to this plan, a new naval establishment was formed at a good deal of expense, and to little effect, to aid in the collection of the customs. Regulation was added to regulation; and the strictest and most unreserved orders were given, for a prevention of all contraband trade here, and in every part of America. A teasing custom-house, and a multiplicity of perplexing regulations, ever have, and ever will appear, the master-piece of finance to people of narrow views; as a paper against smuggling, and the importation of French finery, never fails of furnishing a very popular column in a newspaper.

The greatest part of these regulations were made for America; and they fell so indiscriminately on all sorts of contraband, or supposed contraband, that some of the most valuable branches of trade were driven violently from our ports; which caused an universal consternation throughout the colonies. Every part of the trade was infinitely distressed by them. Men of war now for the first time, armed with regular commissions of custom-house officers, invested the coasts, and gave to the collection of revenue the air of hostile contribution. About the same time that these regulations seemed to threaten the destruction of the only trade from whence the plantations derived any specie, an act was made, putting a stop to the future emission of paper currency, which used to supply its place among them. Hand in hand with this went another act, for obliging the colonies to provide quarters for soldiers. Instantly followed another law, for levying throughout all America new port duties, upon a vast variety of commodities of their consumption, and some of which lay heavy upon objects necessary for their trade and fishery. Immediately upon the heels of these, and amidst the uneasiness and confusion produced by a crowd of new impositions and regulations, some good, some evil, some doubtful, all crude and ill-considered, came another act, for imposing an universal stamp duty on the colonies; and this was declared to be little more than an experiment, and a foundation of future revenue. To



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render these proceedings the more irritating to the colonies, the principal argument used in favour of their ability to pay such duties was the liberality of the grants of their assemblies during the late war. Never could any argument be more insulting and mortifying to a people habituated to the granting of their own money.

Taxes for the purpose of raising revenue had hitherto been sparingly attempted in America. Without ever doubting the extent of its lawful power, parliament always doubted the propriety of such impositions. And the Americans on their part never thought of contesting a right by which they were so little affected. Their assemblies in the main answered all the purposes necessary to the internal œconomy of a free people, and provided for all the exigencies of government which arose amongst themselves. In the midst of that happy enjoyment, they never thought of critically settling the exact limits of a power, which was necessary to their union, their safety, their equality, and even their liberty. Thus the two very difficult points, superiority in the presiding state, and freedom in the subordinate, were on the whole sufficiently, that is, practically, reconciled; without agitating those vexatious questions, which in truth rather belong to metaphysicks than politicks, and which can never be moved without shaking the foundations of the best governments that have ever been constituted by human wisdom. By this measure was let loose that dangerous spirit of disquisition, not in the coolness of philosophical inquiry, but inflamed with all the passions of an haughty resentful people, who thought themselves deeply injured, and that they were contending for every thing that was valuable in the world.

In England, our ministers went on without the least attention to these alarming dispositions; just as if they were doing the most common things in the most usual way, and among a people not only passive but pleased. They took no one step to divert the dangerous spirit which began even then to appear in the colonies, to compromise with it, to mollify it, or to subdue it. No new arrangements were made in civil government; no new powers or instructions were

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given to governours; no augmentation was made, or new disposition, of forces. Never was so critical a measure pursued with so little provision against its necessary consequences. As if all common prudence had abandoned the ministers, and as if they meant to plunge themselves and us headlong into that gulph which stood gaping before them; by giving a year's notice of the project of their stamp-act, they allowed time for all the discontents of that country to fester and come to a head, and for all the arrangements which factious men could make towards an opposition to the law. At the same time they carefully concealed from the eye of parliament those remonstrances which they had actually received; and which in the strongest manner indicated the discontent of some of the colonies, and the consequences which might be expected; they concealed them, even in defiance of an order of council, that they should be laid before parliament. Thus, by concealing the true state of the case, they rendered the wisdom of the nation as improvident as their own temerity, either in preventing or guarding against the mischief. It has indeed, from the beginning to this hour, been the uniform policy of this set of men, in order, at any hazard to obtain a present credit, to propose whatever might be pleasing, as attended with no difficulty; and afterwards to throw all the disappointment of the wild expectations they had raised, upon those who have the hard task of freeing the publick from the consequences of their pernicious projects.

Whilst the commerce and tranquillity of the whole empire were shaken in this manner, our affairs grew still more distracted by the internal dissensions of our ministers. Treachery and ingratitude was charged from one side; despotism and tyranny from the other; the vertigo of the regency bill; the awkward reception of the silk bill in the house of commons, and the inconsiderate and abrupt rejection of it in the house of lords; the strange and violent tumults which arose in consequence, and which were rendered more serious, by being charged by the ministers upon one another; the report of a gross and brutal treatment of the ——, by a minister at the same time odious to the people; all conspir-

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ed to leave the publick, at the close of the session of 1765, in as critical and perilous a situation, as ever the nation was, or could be, in a time when she was not immediately threatened by her neighbours.

It was at this time, and in these circumstances, that a new administration was formed. Professing even industriously, in this publick matter, to avoid anecdotes; I say nothing of those famous reconciliations and quarrels, which weakened the body that should have been the natural support of this administration. I run no risk in affirming, that, surrounded as they were with difficulties of every species, nothing but the strongest and most uncorrupt sense of their duty to the publick could have prevailed upon some of the persons who composed it to undertake the king's business at such a time. Their preceding character, their measures while in power, and the subsequent conduct of many of them, I think, leave no room to charge this assertion to flattery. Having undertaken the commonwealth, what remained for them to do? to piece their conduct upon the broken chain of former measures? If they had been so inclined, the ruinous nature of those measures, which began instantly to appear, would not have permitted it. Scarcely had they entered into office, when letters arrived from all parts of America, making loud complaints, backed by strong reasons, against several of the principal regulations of the late ministry, as threatening destruction to many valuable branches of commerce. These were attended with representations from many merchants and capital manufacturers at home, who had all their interests involved in the support of lawful trade, and in the suppression of every sort of contraband. Whilst these things were under consideration, that conflagration blazed out at once in North America; an universal disobedience, and open resistance to the stamp act; and, in consequence, an universal stop to the course of justice, and to trade and navigation, throughout that great important country; an interval during which the trading interest of England lay under the most dreadful anxiety which it ever felt.

The repeal of that act was proposed. It was much too

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serious a measure, and attended with too many difficulties upon every side, for the then ministry to have undertaken it, as some paltry writers have asserted, from envy and dislike to their predecessors in office. As little could it be owing to personal cowardice, and dread of consequences to themselves. Ministers, timorous from their attachment to place and power, will fear more from the consequences of one court intrigue, than from a thousand difficulties to the commerce and credit of their country by disturbances at three thousand miles distance. From which of these the ministers had most to apprehend at that time, is known, I presume, universally. Nor did they take that resolution from a want of the fullest sense of the inconveniences which must necessarily attend a measure of concession from the sovereign to the subject. That it must increase the insolence of the mutinous spirits in America, was but too obvious. No great measure indeed, at a very difficult crisis, can be pursued, which is not attended with some mischief; none but conceited pretenders in publick business will hold any other language: and none but weak and unexperienced men will believe them, if they should. If we were found in such a crisis, let those whose bold designs, and whose defective arrangements, brought us into it, answer for the consequences. The business of the then ministry evidently was, to take such steps, not as the wishes of our author, or as their own wishes dictated, but as the bad situation which their predecessors had left them, absolutely required.

The disobedience to this act was universal throughout America; nothing, it was evident, but the sending a very strong military, backed by a very strong naval force, would reduce the seditious to obedience. To send it to one town, would not be sufficient; every province of America must be traversed, and must be subdued. I do not entertain the least doubt but this could be done. We might, I think, without much difficulty have destroyed our colonies. This destruction might be effected, probably in a year, or in two at the utmost. If the question was upon a foreign nation, where every successful stroke adds to your own power, and takes from that of a rival, a just war with such a certain su-

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periority would be undoubtedly an advisable measure. But *four million* of debt due to our merchants, the total cessation of a trade annually worth *four million* more, a large foreign traffick, much home manufacture, a very capital immediate revenue arising from colony imports, indeed the produce of every one of our revenues greatly depending on this trade, all these were very weighty accumulated considerations, at least well to be weighed, before that sword was drawn, which even by its victories must produce all the evil effects of the greatest national defeat. How publick credit must have suffered, I need not say. If the condition of the nation, at the close of our foreign war, was what this author represents it, such a civil war would have been a bad couch on which to repose our wearied virtue. Far from being able to have entered into new plans of œconomy, we must have launched into a new sea, I fear a boundless sea, of expense. Such an addition of debt, with such a diminution of revenue and trade, would have left us in no want of a *State of the Nation* to aggravate the picture of our distresses.

Our trade felt this to its vitals; and our then ministers were not ashamed to say, that they sympathized with the feelings of our merchants. The universal alarm of the whole trading body of England will never be laughed at by them as an ill-grounded or a pretended panick. The universal desire of that body will always have great weight with them in every consideration connected with commerce; neither ought the opinion of that body to be slighted (notwithstanding the contemptuous and indecent language of this author and his associates) in any consideration whatsoever of revenue. Nothing amongst us is more quickly or deeply affected by taxes of any kind than trade; and if an American tax was a real relief to England, no part of the community would be sooner, or more materially relieved by it than our merchants. But they well know that the trade of England must be more burthened by one penny raised in America, than by three in England; and if that penny be raised with the uneasiness, the discontent, and the confusion of America, more than by ten.

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If the opinion and wish of the landed interest is a motive, and it is a fair and just one, for taking away a real and large revenue, the desire of the trading interest of England ought to be a just ground for taking away a tax, of little better than speculation, which was to be collected by a war, which was to be kept up with the perpetual discontent of those who were to be affected by it, and the value of whose produce, even after the *ordinary* charges of collection, was very uncertain;* after the *extraordinary*, the dearest purchased revenue that ever was made by any nation.

These were some of the motives drawn from principles of convenience for that repeal. When the object came to be more narrowly inspected, every motive concurred. These colonies were evidently founded in subservience to the commerce of Great Britain. From this principle, the whole system of our laws concerning them became a system of restriction. A double monopoly was established on the part of the parent country; 1. A monopoly of their whole import, which is to be altogether from Great Britain; 2. A monopoly of all their export, which is to be no where but to Great Britain, as far as it can serve any purpose here. On the same idea it was contrived that they should send all their products to us raw, and in their first state; and that they should take every thing from us in the last stage of manufacture.

Were ever a people under such circumstances, that is, a people who were to export raw, and to receive manufactured, and this, not a few luxurious articles, but all articles, even to those of the grossest, most vulgar, and necessary consumption, a people who were in the hands of a general monopolist, were ever such a people suspected of a possibility of becoming a just object of revenue? All the ends of their foundation must be supposed utterly contradicted before they could become such an object. Every trade-law

* It is observable, that the partisans of American taxation, when they have a mind to represent this tax as wonderfully beneficial to England, state it as worth *L.*100,000 a year; when they are to represent it as very light on the Americans, it dwindles to *L.*60,000. Indeed it is very difficult to compute what its produce might have been.

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we have made must have been eluded, and become useless, before they could be in such a condition.

The partisans of the new system, who, on most occasions, take credit for full as much knowledge as they possess, think proper on this occasion to counterfeit an extraordinary degree of ignorance, and in consequence of it to assert, "that the balance (between the colonies and Great Britain) is unknown, and that no important conclusion can be drawn from premises so very uncertain."* Now to what can this ignorance be owing? were the navigation laws made, that this balance should be unknown? is it from the course of exchange that it is unknown, which all the world knows to be greatly and perpetually against the colonies? is it from the doubtful nature of the trade we carry on with the colonies? are not these schemists well apprised, that the colonists, particularly those of the northern provinces, import more from Great Britain, ten times more, than they send in return to us? that a great part of their foreign balance is, and must be remitted to London? I shall be ready to admit that the colonies ought to be taxed to the revenues of this country, when I know that they are out of debt to its commerce. This author will furnish some ground to his theories, and communicate a discovery to the publick, if he can shew this by any medium. But he tells us, that "their seas are covered with ships, and their rivers floating with commerce."† This is true. But it is with *our* ships that the seas are covered; and their rivers float with British commerce. The American merchants are our factors; all in reality, most even in name. The Americans trade, navigate, cultivate, with English capitals; to their own advantage, to be sure; for without these capitals their ploughs would be stopped, and their ships wind-bound. But he who furnishes the capital must, on the whole, be the person principally benefited; the person who works upon it profits on his part too; but he profits in a subordinate way, as our colonies do; that is, as the servant of a wise and indulgent master, and no otherwise. We have all, except the *peculium;* without which, even slaves will not labour.

* Considerations, p. 74. † Considerations, p. 79.

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If the author's principles, which are the common notions, be right, that the price of our manufactures is so greatly enhanced by our taxes; then the Americans already pay in that way a share of our impositions. He is not ashamed to assert, that "France and China may be said, on the same principle, to bear a part of our charges, for they consume our commodities."* Was ever such a method of reasoing heard of? Do not the laws absolutely confine the colonies to buy from us, whether foreign nations sell cheaper or not? On what other idea are all our prohibitions, regulations, guards, penalties, and forfeitures, framed? To secure to us, not a commercial preference, which stands in need of no penalties to enforce it; it finds its own way; but to secure to us a trade, which is a creature of law and institution. What has this to do with the principles of a foreign trade, which is under no monopoly, and in which we cannot raise the price of our goods, without hazarding the demand for them? None but the authors of such measures could ever think of making use of such arguments.

Whoever goes about to reason on any part of the policy of this country with regard to America, upon the mere abstract principles of government, or even upon those of our own ancient constitution, will be often misled. Those who resort for arguments to the most respectable authorities, ancient or modern, or rest upon the clearest maxims, drawn from the experience of other states and empires, will be liable to the greatest errours imaginable. The object is wholly new in the world. It is singular: it is grown up to this magnitude and importance within the memory of man; nothing in history is parallel to it. All the reasonings about it, that are likely to be at all solid, must be drawn from its actual circumstances. In this new system a principle of commerce, of artificial commerce, must predominate. This commerce must be secured by a multitude of restraints very alien from the spirit of liberty; and a powerful authority must reside in the principal state, in order to enforce them. But the people who are to be the subjects of these re-

* Considerations, p. 74.



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straints are descendants of Englishmen; and of an high and free spirit. To hold over them a government made up of nothing but restraints and penalties, and taxes in the granting of which they can have no share, will neither be wise nor long practicable. People must be governed in a manner agreeable to their temper and disposition; and men of free character and spirit must be ruled with, at least, some condescension to this spirit and this character. The British colonist must see something which will distinguish him from the colonists of other nations.

Those reasonings, which infer from the many restraints under which we have already laid America, to our right to lay it under still more, and indeed under all manner of restraints, are conclusive; conclusive as to right; but the very reverse as to policy and practice. We ought rather to infer from our having laid the colonies under many restraints, that it is reasonable to compensate them by every indulgence that can by any means be reconciled to our interest. We have a great empire to rule, composed of a vast mass of heterogeneous governments, all more or less free and popular in their forms, all to be kept in peace, and kept out of conspiracy, with one another, all to be held in subordination to this country; while the spirit of an extensive and intricate and trading interest pervades the whole, always qualifying, and often controlling, every general idea of constitution and government. It is a great and difficult object; and I wish we may possess wisdom and temper enough to manage it as we ought. Its importance is infinite. I believe the reader will be struck, as I have been, with one singular fact. In the year 1704, but sixty-five years ago, the whole trade with our plantations was but a few thousand pounds more in the export article, and a third less in the import, than that which we now carry on with the single island of Jamaica:

| | Exports. | Imports. |
|---|---|---|
| Total English plantations in 1704. - - | £.483,265 - | £.814,491 |
| Jamaica, 1767, - | 467,681 - | 1,243,742 |

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From the same information I find that our dealing with most of the European nations is but little increased; these nations have been pretty much at a stand since that time; and we have rivals in their trade. This colony intercourse is a new world of commerce in a manner created; it stands upon principles of its own; principles hardly worth endangering for any little consideration of extorted revenue.

The reader sees, that I do not enter so fully into this matter as obviously I might. I have already been led into greater lengths than I intended. It is enough to say, that before the ministers of 1765 had determined to propose the repeal of the stamp act in parliament, they had the whole of the American constitution and commerce very fully before them. They considered maturely; they decided with wisdom: let me add, with firmness. For they resolved, as a preliminary to that repeal, to assert in the fullest and least equivocal terms the unlimited legislative right of this country over its colonies; and, having done this, to propose the repeal, on principles, not of constitutional right, but on those of expediency, of equity, of lenity, and of the true interests present and future of that great object for which alone the colonies were founded, navigation and commerce. This plan, I say, required an uncommon degree of firmness, when we consider that some of those persons who might be of the greatest use in promoting the repeal, violently withstood the declaratory act; and they who agreed with administration in the principles of that law, equally made, as well the reasons on which the declaratory act itself stood, as those on which it was opposed, grounds for an opposition to the repeal.

If the then ministry resolved first to declare the right, it was not from any opinion they entertained of its future use in regular taxation. Their opinions were full and declared against the ordinary use of such a power. But it was plain, that the general reasonings which were employed against that power went directly to our whole legislative right; and one part of it could not be yielded to such arguments, without a virtual surrender of all the rest. Besides, if that very specifick power of levying money in the colonies were

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not retained as a sacred trust in the hands of Great Britain (to be used, not in the first instance for supply, but in the last exigence for controul,) it is obvious, that the presiding authority of Great Britain, as the head, the arbiter, and director of the whole empire, would vanish into an empty name, without operation or energy. With the habitual exercise of such a power in the ordinary course of supply, no trace of freedom could remain to America.* If Great Britain were stripped of this right, every principle of unity and subordination in the empire was gone for ever. Whether all this can be reconciled in legal speculation, is a matter of no consequence. It is reconciled in policy; and politicks ought to be adjusted, not to human reasonings, but to human nature; of which the reason is but a part, and by no means the greatest part.

Founding the repeal on this basis, it was judged proper to lay before parliament the whole detail of the American affairs, as fully as it had been laid before the ministry themselves. Ignorance of those affairs had misled parliament. Knowledge alone could bring it into the right road. Every paper of office was laid upon the table of the two houses; every denomination of men, either of America, or connected with it by office, by residence, by commerce, by interest, even by injury; men of civil and military capacity, officers of the revenue, merchants, manufacturers of every species, and from every town in England, attended at the bar. Such evidence never was laid before parliament. If an emulation arose among the ministers and members of parliament, as the author rightly observes,† for the repeal of this act, as

* I do not here enter into the unsatisfactory disquisition concerning representation real or presumed. I only say, that a great people, who have their property, without any reserve, in all cases, disposed of by another people at an immense distance from them, will not think themselves in the enjoyment of freedom. It will be hard to shew to those who are in such a state, which of the usual parts of the definition or description of a free people are applicable to them; and it is neither pleasant nor wise to attempt to prove that they have no right to be comprehended in such a description.

† P. 21.

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well as for the other regulations, it was not on the confident assertions, the airy speculations, or the vain promises of ministers, that it arose. It was the sense of parliament on the evidence before them. No one so much as suspects that ministerial allurements or terrours had any share in it.

Our author is very much displeased, that so much credit was given to the testimony of merchants. He has an habit of railing at them; and he may, if he pleases, indulge himself in it. It will not do great mischief to that respectable set of men. The substance of their testimony was, that their debts in America were very great: that the Americans declined to pay them, or to renew their orders, whilst this act continued: that, under these circumstances, they despaired of the recovery of their debts, or the renewal of their trade in that country: that they apprehended a general failure of mercantile credit. The manufacturers deposed to the same general purpose, with this addition, that many of them had discharged several of their artificers; and, if the law and the resistance to it should continue, must dismiss them all.

This testimony is treated with great contempt by our author. It must be, I suppose, because it was contradicted by the plain nature of things. Suppose then that the merchants had, to gratify this author, given a contrary evidence; and had deposed, that while America remained in a state of resistance, whilst four million of debt remained unpaid, whilst the course of justice was suspended for want of stamped paper, so that no debt could be recovered, whilst there was a total stop to trade, because every ship was subject to seizure for want of stamped clearances, and while the colonies were to be declared in rebellion, and subdued by armed force, that in these circumstances they would still continue to trade cheerfully and fearlessly as before; would not such witnesses provoke universal indignation for their folly or their wickedness, and be deservedly hooted from the bar;* would any human faith have given

* Here the author has a note altogether in his usual strain of reasoning; he finds out that somebody, in the course of this multifarious evidence, had said, "that a very considerable part of the orders of

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credit to such assertions? The testimony of the merchants was necessary for the detail, and to bring the matter home to the feeling of the house; as to the general reasons, they spoke abundantly for themselves.

1765 transmitted from America had been afterwards suspended; but that in case the stamp act was repealed, those orders were to be executed in the present year 1766;" and that, on the repeal of the stamp act, "the exports to the colonies would be at least double the value of the exports of the past year." He then triumphs exceedingly on their having fallen short of it on the state of the custom-house entries. I do not well know what conclusion he draws applicable to his purpose, from these facts. He does not deny that all the orders which came from America subsequent to the disturbances of the stamp act were on the condition of that act being repealed; and, he does not assert that, notwithstanding that act should be enforced by a strong hand, still the orders would be executed. Neither does he quite venture to say that this decline of the trade in 1766 was owing to the repeal. What does he therefore infer from it, favourable to the enforcement of that law? It only comes to this, and no more; those merchants, who thought our trade would be doubled in the subsequent year, were mistaken in their speculations. So that the stamp act was not to be repealed unless this speculation of theirs was a probable event. But it was not repealed in order to double our trade in that year, as every body knows (whatever some merchants might have said,) but lest in that year we should have no trade at all. The fact is, that, during the greatest part of the year 1765, that is, until about the month of October, when the accounts of the disturbances came thick upon us, the American trade went on as usual. Before this time, the stamp act could not affect it. Afterwards, the merchants fell into a great consternation; a general stagnation in trade ensued. But as soon as it was known that the ministry favoured the repeal of the stamp act, several of the bolder merchants ventured to execute their orders; others more timid hung back: in this manner the trade continued in a state of dreadful fluctuation between the fears of those who had ventured, for the event of their boldness, and the anxiety of those whose trade was suspended, until the royal assent was finally given to the bill of repeal. That the trade of 1766 was not equal to that of 1765, could not be owing to the repeal; it arose from quite different causes, of which the author seems not to be aware: 1st, Our conquests during the war had laid open the trade of the French and Spanish West Indies to our colonies much more largely than they had ever enjoyed it; this conti-

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Upon these principles was the act repealed, and it produced all the good effect which was expected from it: quiet was restored; trade generally returned to its ancient channels; time and means were furnished for the better strengthening of government there, as well as for recovering, by judicious measures, the affections of the people, had that ministry continued, or had a ministry succeeded with dispositions to improve that opportunity.

Such an administration did not succeed. Instead of profiting of that season of tranquillity, in the very next year they chose to return to measures of the very same nature with those which had been so solemnly condemned; though upon a smaller scale. The effects have been correspondent. America is again in disorder; not indeed in the same degree as formerly, nor any thing like it. Such good effects have attended the repeal of the stamp act, that the colonies have actually paid the taxes; and they have sought their redress

nued for some time after the peace; but at length it was extremely contracted, and in some places reduced to nothing. Such in particular was the state of Jamaica. On the taking the Havannah all the stores of that island were emptied into that place, which produced unusual orders for goods, for supplying their own consumption, as well as for further speculations of trade. These ceasing, the trade stood on its own bottom. This is one cause of the diminished export to Jamaica; and not the childish idea of the author, of an impossible contraband from the opening of the ports. 2d, The war had brought a great influx of cash into America, for the pay and provision of the troops; and this an unnatural increase of trade; which, as its cause failed, must in some degree return to its ancient and natural bounds. 3d, When the merchants met from all parts, and compared their accounts, they were alarmed at the immensity of the debt due to them from America. They found that the Americans had over-traded their abilities. And, as they found too that several of them were capable of making the state of political events an excuse for their failure in commercial punctuality, many of our merchants in some degree contracted their trade from that moment. However, it is idle, in such an immense mass of trade, so liable to fluctuation, to infer any thing from such a deficiency as one or even two hundred thousand pounds. In 1767, when the disturbances subsided, this deficiency was made up again.

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(upon however improper principles) not in their own violence, as formerly ;* but in the experienced benignity of parliament. They are not easy indeed, nor ever will be so, under this author's schemes of taxation ; but we see no longer the same general fury and confusion, which attended their resistance to the stamp act. The author may rail at the repeal, and those who proposed it, as he pleases. Those honest men suffer all his obloquy with pleasure, in the midst of the quiet which they have been the means of giving to their country ; and would think his praises for their perseverance in a pernicious scheme, a very bad compensation for the disturbance of our peace, and the ruin of our commerce. Whether the return to the system of 1764, for raising a revenue in America, the discontents which have ensued in consequence of it, the general suspension of the assemblies in consequence of these discontents, the use of the military power, and the new and dangerous commissions which now hang over them, will produce equally good effects, is greatly to be doubted. Never, I fear, will this nation and the colonies fall back upon their true centre of gravity, and natural point of repose, until the ideas of 1766 are resumed, and steadily pursued.

As to the regulations, a great subject of the author's accusation, they are of two sorts; one of a mixed nature, of revenue and trade ; the other simply relative to trade. With regard to the former I shall observe, that, in all deliberations concerning America, the ideas of that administration were principally these; to take trade as the primary end, and revenue but as a very subordinate consideration. Where trade was likely to suffer, they did not hesitate for an instant to prefer it to taxes, whose produce at best was contemptible, in comparison of the object which they might endanger. The other of their principles was, to suit the revenue to the object. Where the difficulty of collection, from the nature of the country, and of the revenue establishment, is so very notorious, it was their policy to hold out as few

* The disturbances have been in Boston only ; and were not in consequence of the late duties.

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temptations to smuggling as possible, by keeping the duties as nearly as they could on a balance with the risk. On these principles they made many alterations in the port duties of 1764, both in the mode and in the quantity. The author has not attempted to prove them erroneous. He complains enough to shew that he is in an ill humour, not that his adversaries have done amiss.

As to the regulations which were merely relative to commerce, many were then made; and they were all made upon this principle, that many of the colonies, and those some of the most abounding in people, were so situated as to have very few means of traffick with this country. It became therefore our interest to let them into as much foreign trade as could be given them without interfering with our own; and to secure by every method the returns to the mother country. Without some such scheme of enlargement, it was obvious that any benefit we could expect from these colonies must be extremely limited. Accordingly many facilities were given to their trade with the foreign plantations, and with the southern parts of Europe. As to the confining the returns to this country, administration saw the mischief and folly of a plan of indiscriminate restraint. They applied their remedy to that part where the disease existed, and to that only; on this idea they established regulations, far more likely to check the dangerous clandestine trade with Hamburgh and Holland, than this author's friends, or any of their predecessors had ever done.

The friends of the author have a method surely a little whimsical in all this sort of discussions. They have made an innumerable multitude of commercial regulations, at which the trade of England exclaimed with one voice, and many of which have been altered on the unanimous opinion of that trade. Still they go on, just as before, in a sort of droning panegyrick on themselves, talking of these regulations as prodigies of wisdom; and, instead of appealing to those who are most affected and the best judges, they turn round in a perpetual circle of their own reasonings and pretences; they hand you over from one of their own pamphlets to another: "See," say they, "this demonstrated in



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the Regulations of the Colonies." "See this satisfactorily proved in The Considerations." By and by we shall have another; "See for this The State of the Nation." I wish to take another method in vindicating the opposite system. I refer to the petitions of merchants for these regulations; to their thanks when they were obtained; and to the strong and grateful sense they have ever since expressed of the benefits received under that administration.

All administrations have in their commercial regulations been generally aided by the opinion of some merchants; too frequently by that of a few, and those a sort of favourites: they have been directed by the opinion of one or two merchants, who were to merit in flatteries, and to be paid in contracts; who frequently advised, not for the general good of trade, but for their private advantage. During the administration of which this author complains, the meetings of merchants upon the business of trade were numerous and publick; sometimes at the house of the Marquis of Rockingham; sometimes at Mr. Dowdeswell's; sometimes at Sir George Saville's, an house always open to every deliberation favourable to the liberty or the commerce of his country. Nor were these meetings confined to the merchants of London. Merchants and manufacturers were invited from all the considerable towns in England. They conferred with the ministers and active members of parliament. No private views, no local interests prevailed. Never were points in trade settled upon a larger scale of information. They who attended these meetings well know, what ministers they were who heard the most patiently, who comprehended the most clearly, and who provided the most wisely. Let then this author and his friends still continue in possession of the practice of exalting their own abilities, in their pamphlets, and in the newspapers. They never will persuade the publick, that the merchants of England were in a general confederacy to sacrifice their own interests to those of North America, and to destroy the vent of their own goods in favour of the manufactures of France and Holland.

Had the friends of this author taken these means of information, his extreme terrours of contraband in the West

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India islands would have been greatly quieted, and his objections to the opening of the ports would have ceased. He would have learned, from the most satisfactory analysis of the West India trade, that we have the advantage in every essential article of it; and that almost every restriction on our communication with our neighbours there, is a restriction unfavourable to ourselves.

Such were the principles that guided, and the authority that sanctioned, these regulations. No man ever said, that, in the multiplicity of regulations made in the administration of their predecessors, none were useful: some certainly were so; and I defy the author to shew a commercial regulation of that period, which he can prove, from any authority except his own, to have a tendency beneficial to commerce, that has been repealed. So far were that ministry from being guided by a spirit of contradiction or of innovation.

The author's attack on that administration, for their neglect of our claims on foreign powers, is by much the most astonishing instance he has given, or that, I believe, any man ever did give, of an intrepid effrontery. It relates to the Manilla ransom; to the Canada bills; and to the Russian treaty. Could one imagine, that these very things, which he thus chooses to object to others, have been the principal subject of charge against his favourite ministry? Instead of clearing them of these charges, he appears not so much as to have heard of them; but throws them directly upon the administration which succeeded to that of his friends.

It is not always very pleasant to be obliged to produce the detail of this kind of transactions to the publick view. I will content myself therefore with giving a short state of facts, which, when the author chooses to contradict, he shall see proved, more, perhaps, to his conviction than to his liking. The first fact then is, that the demand for the Manilla ransom had been in the author's favourite administration, so neglected, as to appear to have been little less than tacitly abandoned. At home, no countenance was given to the claimants; and when it was mentioned in parliament, the then leader did not seem, at least, *a very sanguine ad-*

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*vocate in favour of the claim.* These things made it a matter of small difficulty to resume and press that negociation with Spain. However, so clear was our right, that the then ministers resolved to revive it; and so little time was lost, that though that administration was not completed until the 9th of July 1765, on the 20th of the following August, Gen. Conway transmitted a strong and full remonstrance on that subject to the Earl of Rochefort. The argument, on which the court of Madrid most relied, was the dereliction of that claim by the preceding ministers. However, it was still pushed with so much vigour, that the Spaniards, from a positive denial to pay, offered to refer the demand to arbitration. That proposition was rejected; and the demand being still pressed, there was all the reason in the world to expect its being brought to a favourable issue; when it was thought proper to change the administration. Whether under their circumstances, and in the time they continued in power, more could be done, the reader will judge; who will hear with astonishment a charge of remissness from those very men, whose inactivity, to call it by no worse a name, laid the chief difficulties in the way of the revived negociation.

As to the Canada bills, this author thinks proper to assert, "that the proprietors found themselves under a necessity of compounding their demands upon the French court, and accepting terms which they had often rejected, and which the Earl of Halifax had declared he would sooner forfeit his hand than sign."* When I know that the Earl of Halifax says so, the Earl of Halifax shall have an answer; but I persuade myself that his Lordship has given no authority for this ridiculous rant. In the mean time, I shall only speak of it as a common concern of that ministry.

In the first place then I observe, that a convention, for the liquidation of the Canada bills, was concluded under the administration of 1766; when nothing was concluded under that of the favourites of this author.

2. This transaction was, in every step of it, carried on

* P. 24.

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in concert with the persons interested, and was terminated to their entire satisfaction. They would have acquiesced perhaps in terms somewhat lower than those which were obtained. The author is indeed too kind to them. He will, however, let them speak for themselves, and shew what their own opinion was of the measures pursued in their favour.* In what manner the execution of the convention has been since provided for, it is not my present business to examine.

3. The proprietors had absolutely despaired of being paid, at any time, any proportion of their demand, until the change of that ministry. The merchants were checked and discountenanced; they had often been told, by some in authority, of the cheap rate at which these Canada bills had been procured; yet the author can talk of the composition of them as a necessity induced by the change in administration. They found themselves indeed, before that change, under a necessity of hinting somewhat of bringing the matter into parliament; but they were soon silenced, and put in mind of the fate which the Newfoundland business had there met with. Nothing struck them more than the strong contrast between the spirit, and method of proceeding, of the two administrations.

4. The Earl of Halifax never did, nor could, refuse to sign this convention; because this convention, as it stands, never was before him.†

* "They are happy in having found, in your zeal for the dignity of this nation, the means of liquidating their claims, and of concluding with the court of France a convention for the final satisfaction of their demands; and have given us commission, in their names, and on their behalf, most earnestly to entreat your acceptance of their grateful acknowledgments.—Whether they consider themselves as Britons, or as men more particularly profiting by your generous and spirited interposition, they see great reasons to be thankful, for having been supported by a minister, in whose publick affections, in whose wisdom and activity, both the national honour, and the interest of individuals, have been at once so well supported and secured." Thanks of the Canada merchants to general Conway, London, April 28, 1766.

† See the Convention itself printed by Owen and Harrison, Warwick-lane, 1766; particulary the articles two and thirteen.

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The author's last charge on that ministry, with regard to foreign affairs, is the Russian treaty of commerce, which the author thinks fit to assert, was concluded "on terms the Earl of Buckinghamshire had refused to accept of, and which had been deemed by former ministers disadvantageous to the nation, and by the merchants unsafe and unprofitable."*

Both the assertions in this paragraph are equally groundless. The treaty then concluded by Sir George Macartney was not on the terms which the Earl of Buckinghamshire had refused. The Earl of Buckinghamshire never did refuse terms, because the business never came to the point of refusal, or acceptance; all that he did was, to receive the Russian project for a treaty of commerce, and to transmit it to England. This was in November 1764; and he left Petersburgh the January following, before he could even receive an answer from his own court. The conclusion of the treaty fell to his successor. Whoever will be at the trouble to compare it with the treaty of 1734, will, I believe, confess, that, if the former ministers could have obtained such terms, they were criminal in not accepting them.

But the merchants "deemed them unsafe and unprofitable." What merchants? As no treaty ever was more maturely considered, so the opinion of the Russia merchants in London was all along taken; and all the instructions sent over were in exact conformity to that opinion. Our minister there made no step without having previously consulted our merchants resident in Petersburgh, who, before the signing of the treaty, gave the most full and unanimous testimony in its favour. In their address to our minister at that court, among other things, they say, "It may afford some additional satisfaction to your excellency, to receive a publick acknowledgment of *the entire and reserved approbation of every article* in this treaty, from us who are so immediately and so nearly concerned in its consequences." This was signed by the consul general, and every British merchant in Petersburgh.

* P. 23.

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The approbation of those immediately concerned in the consequences is nothing to this author. He and his friends have so much tenderness for peoples' interests, and understand them so much better than they do themselves, that, whilst these politicians are contending for the best of possible terms, the claimants are obliged to go without any terms at all.

One of the first and justest complaints against the administration of the author's friends, was the want of vigour in their foreign negotiations. Their immediate successors endeavoured to correct that errour, along with others; and there was scarcely a foreign court, in which the new spirit that had arisen was not sensibly felt, acknowledged, and sometimes complained of. On their coming into administration, they found the demolition of Dunkirk entirely at a stand; instead of demolition, they found construction; for the French were then at work on the repair of the jettees. On the remonstrances of General Conway, some parts of these jettees were immediately destroyed. The Duke of Richmond personally surveyed the place, and obtained a fuller knowledge of its true state and condition than any of our ministers had done; and, in consequence, had larger offers from the Duke of Choiseul than had ever been received. But, as these were short of our just expectations under the treaty, he rejected them. Our then ministers, knowing that, in their administration, the peoples' minds were set at ease upon all the essential points of publick and private liberty, and that no project of theirs could endanger the concord of the empire, were under no restraint from pursuing every just demand upon foreign nations.

The author, towards the end of this work, falls into reflections upon the state of publick morals in this country: he draws use from this doctrine, by recommending his friend to the king and the publick, as another Duke of Sully; and he concludes the whole performance with a very devout prayer.

The prayers of politicians may sometimes be sincere; and as this prayer is in substance, that the author, or his

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friends, may be soon brought into power, I have great reason to believe it is very much from the heart. It must be owned too that after he has drawn such a picture, such a shocking picture, of the state of this country, he has great faith in thinking the means he prays for sufficient to relieve us: after the character he has given of its inhabitants of all ranks and classes, he has great charity in caring much about them; and indeed, no less hope, in being of opinion, that such a detestable nation can ever become the care of Providence. He has not even found five good men in our devoted city.

He talks indeed of men of virtue and ability. But where are his *men* of virtue and ability to be found? Are they in the present administration? never were a set of people more blackened by this author. Are they among the party of those (no small body) who adhere to the system of 1766? these, it is the great purpose of this book to calumniate. Are they the persons who acted with his great friend, since the change in 1762, to his removal in 1765? scarcely any of these are now out of employment; and we are in possession of his desideratum. Yet I think he hardly means to select, even some of the highest of them, as examples fit for the reformation of a corrupt world.

He observes, that the virtue of the most exemplary prince that ever swayed a sceptre "can never warm or illuminate the body of his people, if foul mirrors are placed so near him as to refract and dissipate the rays at their first emanation."* Without observing upon the propriety of this metaphor, or asking how mirrors come to have lost their old quality of reflecting, and to have acquired that of refracting, and dissipating rays, and how far their foulness will account for this change; the remark itself is common and true: no less true, and equally surprising from him, is that which immediately precedes it;† it is in vain to endeavour to check the progress of irreligion and licentiousness, by punishing such crimes in *one individual*, if others equally cul-

* P. 46.

† P. 46.

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pable are rewarded with the honours and emoluments of the state." I am not in the secret of the author's manner of writing; but it appears to me, that he must intend these reflections as a satire upon the administration of his happy years. Were ever the honours and emoluments of the state more lavishly squandered upon persons scandalous in their lives than during that period? In these scandalous lives, was there any thing more scandalous than the mode of punishing *one culpable individual?* In that individual, is any thing more culpable than his having been seduced by the example of some of those very persons by whom he was thus persecuted?

The author is so eager to attack others, that he provides but indifferently for his own defence. I believe, without going beyond the page I have now before me, he is very sensible, that I have sufficient matter of further, and, if possible, of heavier, charge against his friends, upon his own principle. But it is because the advantage is too great, that I decline making use of it. I wish the author had not thought that all methods are lawful in party. Above all, he ought to have taken care not to wound his enemies through the sides of his country. This he has done, by making that monstrous and overcharged picture of the distresses of our situation. No wonder that he, who finds this country in the same condition with that of France at the time of Henry the Fourth, could also find a resemblance between his political friend and the Duke of Sully. As to those personal resemblances, people will often judge of them from their affections: they may imagine in these clouds whatsoever figures they please; but what is the conformation of that eye which can discover a resemblance of this country and these times to those with which the author compares them? France, a country just recovered out of twenty-five years of the most cruel and desolating civil war that perhaps was ever known. The kingdom, under the veil of momentary quiet, full of the most atrocious political, operating upon the most furious fanatical factions. Some pretenders even to the crown; and those who did not pretend to the whole, aimed at the parti-



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tion of the monarchy. There were almost as many competitors as provinces; and all abetted by the greatest, the most ambitious, and most enterprising power in Europe. No place safe from treason; no, not the bosoms on which the most amiable prince that ever lived reposed his head; not his mistresses; not even his queen. As to the finances, they had scarce an existence, but as a matter of plunder to the managers, and of grants to insatiable and ungrateful courtiers.

How can our author have the heart to describe this as any sort of parallel to our situation? To be sure, an April shower has some resemblance to a water spout; for they are both wet: and there is some likeness between a summer evening's breeze and an hurricane; they are both wind: but who can compare our disturbances, our situation, or our finances, to those of France in the time of Henry? Great Britain is indeed at this time wearied, but not broken, with the efforts of a victorious foreign war; not sufficiently relieved by an inadequate peace, but somewhat benefited by that peace, and infinitely by the consequences of that war. The powers of Europe awed by our victories, and lying in ruins upon every side of us. Burthened indeed we are with debt, but abounding with resources. We have a trade, not perhaps equal to our wishes, but more than ever we possessed. In effect, no pretender to the crown; nor nutriment for such desperate and destructive factions as have formerly shaken this kingdom.

As to our finances, the author trifles with us. When Sully came to those of France, in what order was any part of the financial system? or what system was there at all? There is no man in office who must not be sensible that ours is, without the act of any parading minister, the most regular and orderly system perhaps that ever was known; the best secured against all frauds in the collection, and all misapplication in the expenditure of publick money.

I admit that, in this flourishing state of things, there are appearances enough to excite uneasiness and apprehension. I admit there is a canker-worm in the rose;

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——————medio de fonte leporum
Surgit amari aliquid, quod in ipsis floribus angat.

This is nothing else than a spirit of disconnexion, of distrust, and of treachery among publick men. It is no accidental evil; nor has its effect been trusted to the usual frailty of nature; the distemper has been inoculated. The author is sensible of it, and we lament it together. This distemper is alone sufficient to take away considerably from the benefits of our constitution and situation, and perhaps to render their continuance precarious. If these evil dispositions should spread much farther, they must end in our destruction; for nothing can save a people destitute of publick and private faith. However, the author, for the present state of things, has extended the charge by much too widely; as men are but too apt to take the measure of all mankind from their own particular acquaintance. Barren as this age may be in the growth of honour and virtue, the country does not want, at this moment, as strong, and those not a few examples, as were ever known, of an unshaken adherence to principle, and attachment to connexion, against every allurement of interest. Those examples are not furnished by the great alone; nor by those, whose activity in publick affairs may render it suspected that they make such a character one of the rounds in their ladder of ambition; but by men more quiet, and more in the shade, on whom an unmixed sense of honour alone could operate. Such examples indeed are not furnished in great abundance amongst those who are the subjects of the author's panegyrick. He must look for them in another camp. He who complains of the ill effects of a divided and heterogeneous administration, is not justifiable in labouring to render odious in the eyes of the publick those men, whose principles, whose maxims of policy, and whose personal character, can alone administer a remedy to this capital evil of the age; neither is he consistent with himself, in constantly extolling those whom he knows to be the authors of the very mischief of which he complains, and which the whole nation feels so deeply.

The persons who are the objects of his dislike and com-

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plaint are many of them of the first families, and weightiest properties, in the kingdom; but infinitely more distinguished for their untainted honour publick and private, and their zealous but sober attachment to the constitution of their country, than they can be by any birth, or any station. If they are the friends of any one great man rather than another, it is not that they make his aggrandizement the end of their union; or because they know him to be the most active in caballing for his connexions the largest and speediest emoluments. It is because they know him, by personal experience, to have wise and enlarged ideas of the publick good, and an invincible constancy in adhering to it; because they are convinced, by the whole tenour of his actions, that he will never negotiate away their honour or his own: and that, in or out of power, change of situation will make no alteration in his conduct. This will give to such a person, in such a body, an authority and respect that no minister ever enjoyed among his venal dependants, in the highest plenitude of his power; such as servility never can give, such as ambition never can receive or relish.

This body will often be reproached by their adversaries, for want of ability in their political transactions; they will be ridiculed for missing many favourable conjunctures, and not profiting of several brilliant opportunities of fortune; but they must be contented to endure that reproach; for they cannot acquire the reputation of *that kind* of ability without losing all the other reputation they possess.

They will be charged too with a dangerous spirit of exclusion and proscription, for being unwilling to mix in schemes of administration, which have no bond of union, or principle of confidence. That charge too they must suffer with patience. If the reason of the thing had not spoken loudly enough, the miserable examples of the several administrations constructed upon the idea of systematick discord would be enough to frighten them from such monstrous and ruinous conjunctions. It is however false, that the idea of an united administration carries with it that of a proscription of any other party. It does indeed imply the necessity of having the great strong holds of government in

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well-united hands, in order to secure the predominance of right and uniform principles; of having the capital offices of deliberation and execution of those who can deliberate with mutual confidence, and who will execute what is resolved with firmness and fidelity. If this system cannot be rigorously adhered to in practice (and what system can be so?) it ought to be the constant aim of good men to approach as nearly to it as possible. No system of that kind can be formed, which will not leave room fully sufficient for healing coalitions: but no coalition, which, under the specious name of independency, carries in its bosom the unreconciled principles of the original discord of parties, ever was, or will be, an healing coalition. Nor will the mind of our Sovereign ever know repose, his kingdom settlement, or his business order, efficiency, or grace with his people, until things are established upon the basis of some set of men, who are trusted by the publick, and who can trust one another.

This comes rather nearer to the mark than the author's description of a proper administration, under the name of *men of ability and virtue*, which conveys no definite idea at all; nor does it apply specifically to our grand national distemper. All parties pretend to these qualities. The present ministry, no favourites of the author, will be ready enough to declare themselves persons of virtue and ability; and if they choose a vote for that purpose, perhaps it would not be quite impossible for them to procure it. But, if the disease be this distrust and disconnexion, it is easy to know who are sound, and who are tainted; who are fit to restore us to health, who to continue, and to spread the contagion. The present ministry being made up of draughts from all parties in the kingdom, if they should profess any adherence to the connexions they have left, they must convict themselves of the blackest treachery. They therefore choose rather to renounce the principle itself, and to brand it with the name of pride and faction. This test with certainty discriminates the opinions of men. The other is a description vague and unsatisfactory.

As to the unfortunate gentlemen who may at any time

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compose that system, which, under the plausible title of an administration, subsists but for the establishment of weakness and confusion; they fall into different classes, with different merits. I think the situation of some people in that state may deserve a certain degree of compassion; at the same time that they furnish an example, which, it is to be hoped, by being a severe one, will have its effect, at least, on the growing generation; if an original seduction, on plausible but hollow pretences, into loss of honour, friendship, consistency, security, and repose, can furnish it. It is possible to draw, even from the very prosperity of ambition, examples of terrour, and motives to compassion.

I believe the instances are exceedingly rare of men immediately passing over a clear marked line of virtue into declared vice and corruption. There are a sort of middle tints and shades between the two extremes; there is something uncertain on the confines of the two empires which they first pass through, and which renders the change easy and imperceptible. There are even a sort of splendid impositions so well contrived, that, at the very time the path of rectitude is quitted for ever, men seem to be advancing into some higher and nobler road of publick conduct. Not that such impositions are strong enough in themselves; but a powerful interest, often concealed from those whom it affects, works at the bottom, and secures the operation. Men are thus debauched away from those legitimate connexions, which they had formed on a judgment, early perhaps but sufficiently mature, and wholly unbiassed. They do not quit them upon any ground of complaint, for grounds of just complaint may exist, but upon the flattering and most dangerous of all principles, that of mending what is well. Gradually they are habituated to other company; and a change in their habitudes soon makes a way for a change in their opinions. Certain persons are no longer so very frightful, when they come to be known and to be serviceable. As to their old friends, the transition is easy; from friendship to civility; from civility to enmity: few are the steps from dereliction to persecution.

People not very well grounded in the principles of pub-

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lic morality find a set of maxims in office ready made for them, which they assume as naturally and inevitably, as any of the insignia or instruments of the situation. A certain tone of the solid and practical is immediately acquired. Every former profession of public spirit is to be considered as a debauch of youth, or, at best, as a visionary scheme of unattainable perfection. The very idea of consisteney is exploded. The convenience of the business of the day is to furnish the principle for doing it. Then the whole ministerial cant is quickly got by heart. The prevalence of faction is to be lamented. All opposition is to be regarded as the effect of envy and disappointed ambition. All administrations are declared to be alike. The same necessity justifies all their measures. It is no longer a matter of discussion, who or what administration is; but that administration is to be supported, is a general maxim. Flattering themselves that their power is become necessary to the support of all order and government; every thing which tends to the support of that power is sanctified, and becomes a part of the public interest.

Growing every day more formed to affairs, and better knit in their limbs, when the occasion (now the only rule) requires it, they become capable of sacrificing those very persons to whom they had before sacrificed their original friends. It is now only in the ordinary course of business to alter an opinion, or to betray a connexion. Frequently relinquishing one set of men and adopting another, they grow into a total indifference to human feeling, as they had before to moral obligation; until, at length, no one original impression remains upon their minds; every principle is obliterated; every sentiment effaced.

In the mean time, that power, which all these changes aimed at securing, remains still as tottering and as uncertain as ever. They are delivered up into the hands of those who feel neither respect for their persons, nor gratitude for their favours; who are put about them in appearance to serve, in reality to govern them; and, when the signal is given, to abandon and destroy them in order to set up some newer dupe of ambition, who in his turn is to be abandoned and

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destroyed. Thus living in a state of continual uneasiness and ferment, softened only by the miserable consolation of giving now and then preferments to those for whom they have no value; they are unhappy in their situation, yet find it impossible to resign. Until, at length, soured in temper, and disappointed by the very attainment of their ends, in some angry, in some haughty, or some negligent moment, they incur the displeasure of those upon whom they have rendered their very being dependent. Then *perierunt tempora longi servitii;* they are cast off with scorn; they are turned out, emptied of all natural character, of all intrinsick worth, of all essential dignity, and deprived of every consolation of friendship. Having rendered all retreat to old principles ridiculous, and to old regards impracticable, not being able to counterfeit pleasure, or to discharge discontent, nothing being sincere, or right, or balanced in their minds, it is more than a chance, that, in the delirium of the last stage of their distempered power, they make an insane political testament, by which they throw all their remaining weight and consequence into the scale of their declared enemies, and the avowed authors of their destruction. Thus they finish their course. Had it been possible that the whole, or even a great part of these effects on their minds, I say nothing of the effect upon their fortunes, could have appeared to them in their first departure from the right line, it is certain they would have rejected every temptation with horrour. The principle of these remarks, like every good principle in morality, is trite; but its frequent application is not the less necessary.

As to others, who are plain practical men, they have been guiltless at all times of all publick pretence. Neither the author nor any one else, has reason to be angry with them. They belonged to his friend for their interest; for their interest they quitted him; and when it is their interest, he may depend upon it, they will return to their former connexion. Such people subsist at all times, and, though the nuisance of all, are at no time a worthy subject of discussion. It is false virtue and plausible errour that do the mischief.

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If men come to government with right dispositions, they have not that unfavourable subject which this author represents to work upon. Our circumstances are indeed critical; but then they are the critical circumstances of a strong and mighty nation. If corruption and meanness are greatly spread, they are not spread universally. Many publick men are hitherto examples of publick spirit and integrity. Whole parties, as far as large bodies can be uniform, have preserved character. However they may be deceived in some particulars, I know of no set of men amongst us, which does not contain persons, on whom the nation, in a difficult exigence, may well value itself. Private life, which is the nursery of the commonwealth, is yet in general pure, and on the whole disposed to virtue; and the people at large want neither generosity nor spirit. No small part of that very luxury, which is so much the subject of the author's declamation, but which, in most parts of life, by being well balanced and diffused, is only decency and convenience, has perhaps as many, or more, good than evil consequences attending it. It certainly excites industry, nourishes emulation, and inspires some sense of personal value into all ranks of people. What we want is to establish more fully an opinion of uniformity, and consistency of character, in the leading men of the state; such as will restore some confidence to profession and appearance, such as will fix subordination upon esteem. Without this, all schemes are begun at the wrong end. All who join in them are liable to their consequences. All men who, under whatever pretext, take a part in the formation or the support of systems constructed in such a manner as must, in their nature, disable them from the execution of their duty, have made themselves guilty of all the present distraction, and of the future ruin, which they may bring upon their country.

It is a serious affair, this studied disunion in government. In cases where union is most consulted in the constitution of a ministry, and where persons are best disposed to promote it, differences, from the various ideas of men, will arise; and, from their passions, will often ferment into violent heats, so as greatly to disorder all publick business. What must be the



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consequence, when the very distemper is made the basis of the constitution; and the original weakness of human nature is still further enfeebled by art and contrivance? It must subvert government from the very foundation. It turns our publick councils into the most mischievous cabals; where the consideration is, not how the nation's business shall be carried on, but how those who ought to carry it on shall circumvent each other. In such a state of things, no order, uniformity, dignity, or effect, can appear in our proceedings either at home or abroad. Nor will it make much difference, whether some of the constituent parts of such an administration are men of virtue or ability, or not; supposing it possible that such men, with their eyes open, should choose to make a part in such a body.

The effects of all human contrivances are in the hand of Providence. I do not like to answer, as our author so readily does, for the event of any speculation. But sure the nature of our disorders, if any thing, must indicate the proper remedy. Men who act steadily on the principles I have stated may in all events be very serviceable to their country; in one case, by furnishing (if their Sovereign should be so advised) an administration formed upon ideas very different from those which have for some time been unfortunately fashionable. But, if this should not be the case, they may be still serviceable; for the example of a large body of men, steadily sacrificing ambition to principle, can never be without use. It will certainly be prolifick, and draw others to an imitation. *Vera gloria radices agit, atque etiam propagatur.*

I do not think myself of consequence enough to imitate my author, in troubling the world with the prayers or wishes I may form for the publick: full as little am I disposed to imitate his professions; those professions are long since worn out in the political service. If the work will not speak for the author, his own declarations deserve but little credit.

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# APPENDIX.

So much misplaced industry has been used by the author of The State of the Nation, as well as by other writers, to infuse discontent into the people, on account of the late war, and of the effects of our national debt; that nothing ought to be omitted which may tend to disabuse the publick upon these subjects. When I had gone through the foregoing sheets, I recollected, that, in pages 58, 59, 60, I only gave the comparative states of the duties collected by the excise at large; together with the quantities of strong beer brewed in the two periods which are there compared. It might be still thought, that some other articles of popular consumption, of general convenience, and connected with our manufactures, might possibly have declined. I therefore now think it right to lay before the reader the state of the produce of three capital duties on such articles; duties which have frequently been made the subject of popular complaint. The duty on candles; that on soap, paper, &c.; and that on hides.

| | |
|---|---|
| Average of net produce of duty on soap, &c. for 8 years, ending 1767 - - | £.264,902 |
| Average of ditto for 8 years, ending 1754 - | 228,114 |
| Average increase | £.36,788 |

| | |
|---|---|
| Average of net produce of duty on candles for 8 years, ending 1767 - - - | £.155,789 |
| Average ditto for 8 years, ending 1754 - | 136,716 |
| Average increase | £.19,073 |

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| | |
|---|---|
| Average net produce of duty on hides, 8 years, ending 1767 - - - - | £.189,216 |
| Ditto 8 years, ending 1754 - - - | 168,200 |
| Average increase | £.21,016 |

This increase has not arisen from any additional duties. None have been imposed on these articles during the war. Notwithstanding the burthens of the war, and the late dearness of provisions, the consumption of all these articles has increased, and the revenue along with it.

There is another point in The State of the Nation, to which, I fear, I have not been so full in my answer as I ought to have been, and as I am well warranted to be. The author has endeavoured to throw a suspicion, or something more, on that salutary, and indeed necessary measure of opening the ports in Jamaica. "Orders were given,"* says he, "in *August*, 1765, for the free admission of Spanish vessels into all the colonies." He then observes, that the exports to Jamaica fell £.40,904 short of those of 1764; and that the exports of the succeeding year, 1766, fell short of those of 1765, about eighty pounds; from whence he wisely infers, that this decline of exports being *since* the relaxation of the laws of trade, there is a just ground of suspicion, that the colonies have been supplied with foreign commodities instead of British.

Here, as usual with him, the author builds on a fact which is absolutely false; and which, being so, renders his whole hypothesis absurd and impossible. He asserts, that the order for admitting Spanish vessels was given in *August*, 1765. That order was not *signed at the treasury board until the 15th day of the November following;* and therefore so far from affecting the exports of the year 1765, that, supposing all possible diligence in the commissioners of the customs in expediting that order, and every advantage of vessels ready to sail, and the most favourable wind, it would hardly even arrive in Jamaica within the limits of that year.

* His note, p. 22.

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This order could therefore by no possibility be a cause of the decrease of exports in 1765. If it had any mischievous operation, it could not be before 1766. In that year, according to our author, the exports fell short of the preceding, just *eighty* pounds. He is welcome to that diminution; and to all the consequences he can draw from it.

But, as an auxiliary to account for this dreadful loss, he brings in the Free-port act, which he observes (for his convenience) to have been made in spring, 1766; but (for his convenience likewise) he forgets, that, by the express provision of the act, the regulation was not to be in force in Jamaica until the November following. Miraculous must be the activity of that contraband whose operation in America could, before the end of that year, have re-acted upon England, and checked the exportation from hence! unless he chooses to suppose, that the merchants, at whose solicitation this act had been obtained, were so frighted at the accomplishment of their own most earnest and anxious desire, that, before any good or evil effect from it could happen, they immediately put a stop to all further exportation.

It is obvious that we must look for the true effect of that act at the time of its first possible operation, that is, in the year 1767. On this idea how stands the account?

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1764 | Exports to Jamaica - - | £.456,528 |
| 1765 | - - - - - | 415,624 |
| 1766 | - - - - - | 415,544 |
| 1767 | (first year of the Free-port act) - | 467,681 |

This author, for the sake of a present momentary credit, will hazard any future and permanent disgrace. At the time he wrote, the account of 1767 could not be made up. This was the very first year of the trial of the Free-port act; and we find that the sale of British commodities is so far from lessened by that act, that the export of 1767 amounts to £.52,000 more than that of either of the two preceding years, and is £.11,000 above that of his standard year 1764. If I could prevail on myself to argue in

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favour of a great commercial scheme from the appearance of things in a single year, I should from this increase of export infer the beneficial effects of that measure. In truth, it is not wanting. Nothing but the thickest ignorance of the Jamaica trade could have made any one entertain a fancy, that the least ill effect on our commerce could follow from this opening of the ports. But, if the author argues the effect of regulations in the American trade from the export of the year in which they are made, or even of the following; why did he not apply this rule to his own? He had the same paper before him which I have now before me. He must have seen that in his standard year (the year 1764,) the principal year of his new regulations, the export fell no less than £.128,450 short of that in 1763! Did the export trade revive by these regulations in 1765, during which year they continued in their full force? It fell about £.40,000 still lower. Here is a fall of £.168,000; to account for which, would have become the author much better than piddling for an £.80 fall in the year 1766 (the only year in which *the order* he objects to could operate,) or in presuming a fall of exports from a regulation which took place only in November 1766; whose effects could not appear until the following year; and which, when they do appear, utterly overthrow all his flimsy reasons and affected suspicions upon the effect of opening the ports.

This author, in the same paragraph, says, that "it was asserted by *the American factors and agents*, that the commanders of our ships of war and tenders, having custom-house commissions, and the strict orders given in 1764 for a due execution of the laws of trade in the colonies, had deterred the Spaniards from trading with us; that the sale of British manufactures in the West Indies had been greatly lessened, and the receipt of large sums of specie prevented."

If the *American factors and agents* asserted this, they had good ground for their assertion. They knew that the Spanish vessels had been driven from our ports. The author does not positively deny the fact. If he should, it will be prov-

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ed. When the factors connected this measure and its natural consequences, with an actual fall in the exports to Jamaica, to no less an amount than £.128,450 in one year, and with a further fall in the next, is their assertion very wonderful? The author himself is full as much alarmed by a fall of only £.40,000; for, giving him the facts which he chooses to coin, it is no more. The expulsion of the Spanish vessels must certainly have been one cause, if not of the first declension of the exports, yet of their continuance in their reduced state. Other causes had their operation, without doubt. In what degree each cause produced its effect, it is hard to determine. But the fact of a fall of exports upon the restraining plan, and of a rise upon the taking place of the enlarging plan, is established beyond all contradiction.

This author says, that the facts relative to the Spanish trade were asserted by *American factors and agents*; insinuating, that the ministry of 1766 had no better authority for their plan of enlargement than such assertions. The moment he chooses it, he shall see the very same thing asserted by governors of provinces, by commanders of men of war, and by officers of the customs; persons the most bound in duty to prevent contraband, and the most interested in the seizures to be made in consequence of strict regulation. I suppress them for the present; wishing that the author may not drive me to a more full discussion of this matter than it may be altogether prudent to enter into. I wish he had not made any of these discussions necessary.

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# THOUGHTS

## ON THE CAUSE OF THE PRESENT DISCONTENTS.

Hoc vero occultum, intestinum, domesticum malum, non modo non existit, verum etiam opprimit, antiquam perspicere atque explorare potueris. Cic.

1770.

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It is an undertaking of some degree of delicacy to examine into the cause of publick disorders. If a man happens not to succeed in such an inquiry, he will be thought weak and visionary; if he touches the true grievance, there is a danger that he may come near to persons of weight and consequence, who will rather be exasperated at the discovery of their errours, than thankful for the occasion of correcting them. If he should be obliged to blame the favourites of the people, he will be considered as the tool of power; if he censures those in power, he will be looked on as an instrument of faction. But in all exertions of duty something is to be hazarded. In cases of tumult and disorder, our law has invested every man, in some sort, with the authority of a magistrate. When the affairs of the nation are distracted, private people are, by the spirit of that law, justified in stepping a little out of their ordinary sphere. They enjoy a privilege, of somewhat more dignity and effect, than that of idle lamentation over the calamities of their country. They may look into them narrowly; they may reason upon them liberally; and if they should be so fortunate as to discover the true source of the mischief, and to suggest any probable method of removing it, though they may displease the rulers for the day, they are certainly of service to the cause of government. Government is deep-

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ly interested in every thing which, even through the medium of some temporary uneasiness, may tend finally to compose the minds of the subject, and to conciliate their affections. I have nothing to do here with the abstract value of the voice of the people. But as long as reputation, the most precious possession of every individual, and as long as opinion, the great support of the state, depend entirely upon that voice, it can never be considered as a thing of little consequence either to individuals or to governments. Nations are not primarily ruled by laws; less by violence. Whatever original energy may be supposed either in force or regulation, the operation of both is, in truth, merely instrumental. Nations are governed by the same methods, and on the same principles, by which an individual without authority is often able to govern those who are his equals or his superiours; by a knowledge of their temper, and by a judicious management of it; I mean,—when publick affairs are steadily and quietly conducted; and when government is nothing but a continued scuffle between the magistrate and the multitude; in which sometimes the one and sometimes the other is uppermost; in which they alternately yield and prevail, in a series of contemptible victories, and scandalous submissions. The temper of the people amongst whom he presides ought therefore to be the first study of a statesman. And the knowledge of this temper it is by no means impossible for him to attain, if he has not an interest in being ignorant of what it is his duty to learn.

To complain of the age we live in, to murmur at the present possessors of power, to lament the past, to conceive extravagant hopes of the future, are the common dispositions of the greatest part of mankind; indeed the necessary effects of the ignorance and levity of the vulgar. Such complaints and humours have existed in all times; yet as all times have *not* been alike, true political sagacity manifests itself, in distinguishing that complaint which only characterizes the general infirmity of human nature, from those which are symptoms of the particular distemperature of our own air and season.



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Nobody, I believe, will consider it merely as the language of spleen or disappointment, if I say, that there is something particularly alarming in the present conjuncture. There is hardly a man, in or out of power, who holds any other language. That government is at once dreaded and contemned; that the laws are despoiled of all their respected and salutary terrours; that their inaction is a subject of ridicule, and their exertion of abhorrence; that rank, and office, and title, and all the solemn plausibilities of the world, have lost their reverence and effect; that our foreign politicks are as much deranged as our domestick œconomy; that our dependencies are slackened in their affection, and loosened from their obedience; that we know neither how to yield nor how to enforce; that hardly any thing above or below, abroad or at home, is sound and entire; but that disconnexion and confusion, in offices, in parties, in families, in parliament, in the nation, prevail beyond the disorders of any former time; these are facts universally admitted and lamented.

This state of things is the more extraordinary, because the great parties which formerly divided and agitated the kingdom are known to be in a manner entirely dissolved. No great external calamity has visited the nation; no pestilence or famine. We do not labour at present under any scheme of taxation new or oppressive in the quantity or in the mode. Nor are we engaged in unsuccessful war; in which, our misfortunes might easily pervert our judgment; and our minds, sore from the loss of national glory, might feel every blow of fortune as a crime in government.

It is impossible that the cause of this strange distemper should not sometimes become a subject of discourse. It is a compliment due, and which I willingly pay, to those who administer our affairs, to take notice in the first place of their speculation. Our ministers are of opinion, that the increase of our trade and manufactures, that our growth by colonization, and by conquest, have concurred to accumulate immense wealth in the hands of some individuals; and this again being dispersed among the people, has rendered them universally proud, ferocious, and ungovernable; that

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the insolence of some from their enormous wealth, and the boldness of others from a guilty poverty, have rendered them capable of the most atrocious attempts; so that they have trampled upon all subordination, and violently borne down the unarmed laws of a free government; barriers too feeble against the fury of a populace so fierce and licentious as ours. They contend, that no adequate provocation has been given for so spreading a discontent; our affairs having been conducted throughout with remarkable temper and consummate wisdom. The wicked industry of some libellers, joined to the intrigues of a few disappointed politicians, have, in their opinion, been able to produce this unnatural ferment in the nation.

Nothing indeed can be more unnatural than the present convulsions of this country, if the above account be a true one. I confess I shall assent to it with great reluctance, and only on the compulsion of the clearest and firmest proofs; because their account resolves itself into this short but discouraging proposition, "That we have a very good ministry, but that we are a very bad people;" that we set ourselves to bite the hand that feeds us; that with a malignant insanity we oppose the measures, and ungratefully vilify the persons, of those whose sole object is our own peace and prosperity. If a few puny libellers, acting under a knot of factious politicians, without virtue, parts, or character (such they are constantly represented by these gentlemen,) are sufficient to excite this disturbance, very perverse must be the disposition of that people, amongst whom such a disturbance can be excited by such means. It is besides no small aggravation of the publick misfortune, that the disease, on this hypothesis, appears to be without remedy. If the wealth of the nation be the cause of its turbulence, I imagine it is not proposed to introduce poverty, as a constable to keep the peace. If our dominions abroad are the roots which feed all this rank luxuriance of sedition, it is not intended to cut them off in order to famish the fruit. If our liberty has enfeebled the executive power, there is no design, I hope, to call in the aid of despotism, to fill up the deficiencies of law. Whatever may be intended, these things are not yet professed. We

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seem therefore to be driven to absolute despair; for we have no other materials to work upon, but those out of which God has been pleased to form the inhabitants of this island. If these be radically and essentially vicious, all that can be said is, that those men are very unhappy, to whose fortune or duty it falls to administer the affairs of this untoward people. I hear it indeed sometimes asserted, that a steady perseverance in the present measures, and a rigorous punishment of those who oppose them, will in course of time infallibly put an end to these disorders. But this, in my opinion, is said without much observation of our present disposition, and without any knowledge at all of the general nature of mankind. If the matter of which this nation is composed be so very fermentable as these gentlemen describe it, leaven never will be wanting to work it up, as long as discontent, revenge and ambition, have existence in the world. Particular punishments are the cure for accidental distempers in the state; they inflame rather than allay those heats which arise from the settled mismanagement of the government, or from a natural indisposition in the people. It is of the utmost moment not to make mistakes in the use of strong measures: and firmness is then only a virtue when it accompanies the most perfect wisdom. In truth, inconstancy is a sort of natural corrective of folly and ignorance.

I am not one of those who think that the people are never in the wrong. They have been so, frequently and outrageously, both in other countries and in this. But I do say, that in all disputes between them and their rulers, the presumption is at least upon a par in favour of the people. Experience may perhaps justify me in going further. Where popular discontents have been very prevalent, it may well be affirmed and supported, that there has been generally something found amiss in the constitution, or in the conduct of government. The people have no interest in disorder. When they do wrong, it is their errour, and not their crime. But with the governing part of the state, it is far otherwise. They certainly may act ill by design, as well as by mistake. "*Les révolutions qui arrivent dans les grands états ne sont point un effect du hazard, ni du caprice des peuples. Rien*

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*ne révolte* les grands *d'un royaume comme* un gouvernement foible et dérangé. *Pour la* populace, *ce n'est jamais par envie d'attaquer qu'elle se soulève, mais par impatience de souffrir.*"* These are the words of a great man; of a minister of state; and a zealous asserter of monarchy. They are applied to the *system of favouritism* which was adopted by Henry the Third of France, and to the dreadful consequences it produced. What he says of revolutions, is equally true of all great disturbances. If this presumption in favour of the subjects against the trustees of power be not the more probable, I am sure it is the more comfortable speculation; because it is more easy to change an administration than to reform a people.

Upon a supposition, therefore, that in the opening of the cause the presumptions stand equally balanced between the parties, there seems sufficient ground to entitle any person to a fair hearing, who attempts some other scheme beside that easy one which is fashionable in some fashionable companies, to account for the present discontents. It is not to be argued that we endure no grievance, because our grievances are not of the same sort with those under which we laboured formerly; not precisely those which we bore from the Tudors, or vindicated on the Stuarts. A great change has taken place in the affairs of this country. For in the silent lapse of events as material alterations have been insensibly brought about in the policy and character of governments and nations, as those which have been marked by the tumult of publick revolutions.

It is very rare indeed for men to be wrong in their feelings concerning publick misconduct; as rare to be right in their speculation upon the cause of it. I have constantly observed, that the generality of people are fifty years, at least, behindhand in their politicks. There are but very few, who are capable of comparing and digesting what passes before their eyes at different times and occasions, so as to form the whole into a distinct system. But in books every thing is settled for them, without the exertion of any considerable

* Mem. de Sully, Tom. i. p. 133.

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diligence or sagacity. For which reason men are wise with but little reflection, and good with little self-denial, in the business of all times except their own. We are very uncorrupt and tolerably enlightened judges of the transactions of past ages; where no passions deceive, and where the whole train of circumstances, from the trifling cause to the tragical event, is set in an orderly series before us. Few are the partisans of departed tyranny; and to be a Whig on the business of an hundred years ago, is very consistent with every advantage of present servility. This retrospective wisdom, and historical patriotism, are things of wonderful convenience: and serve admirably to reconcile the old quarrel between speculation and practice. Many a stern republican, after gorging himself with a full feast of admiration of the Grecian commonwealths and of our true Saxon constitution, and discharging all the splendid bile of his virtuous indignation on King John and King James, sits down perfectly satisfied to the coarsest work and homeliest job of the day he lives in. I believe there was no professed admirer of Henry the Eighth among the instruments of the last King James; nor in the court of Henry the Eighth, was there, I dare say, to be found a single advocate for the favourites of Richard the Second.

No complaisance to our court, or to our age, can make me believe nature to be so changed, but that publick liberty will be among us, as among our ancestors, obnoxious to some person or other; and that opportunities will be furnished for attempting at least, some alteration to the prejudice of our constitution. These attempts will naturally vary in their mode, according to times and circumstances. For ambition, though it has ever the same general views, has not at all times the same means, nor the same particular objects. A great deal of the furniture of antient tyranny is worn to rags; the rest is entirely out of fashion. Besides, there are few statesmen so very clumsy and awkward in their business, as to fall into the identical snare which has proved fatal to their predecessors. When an arbitrary imposition is attempted upon the subject, undoubtedly it will not bear on its forehead the name of *Ship-money*. There is no danger that an

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extension of the *Forest laws* should be the chosen mode of oppression in this age. And when we hear any instance of ministerial rapacity, to the prejudice of the rights of private life, it will certainly not be the exaction of two hundred pullets, from a woman of fashion, for leave to lie with her own husband.*

Every age has its own manners, and its politicks dependent upon them; and the same attempts will not be made against a constitution fully formed and matured, that were used to destroy it in the cradle, or to resist its growth during its infancy.

Against the being of parliament, I am satisfied, no designs have ever been entertained since the revolution. Every one must perceive, that it is strongly the interest of the court, to have some second cause interposed between the ministers and the people. The gentlemen of the house of commons have an interest equally strong, in sustaining the part of that intermediate cause. However they may hire out the *usufruct* of their voices, they never will part with the *fee and inheritance*. Accordingly those who have been of the most known devotion to the will and pleasure of a court, have at the same time been most forward in asserting a high authority in the house of commons. When they knew who were to use that authority, and how it was to be employed, they thought it never could be carried too far. It must be always the wish of an unconstitutional statesman, that a house of commons who are entirely dependent upon him, should have every right of the people entirely dependent upon their pleasure. It was soon discovered, that the forms of a free, and the ends of an arbitrary government, were things not altogether incompatible.

The power of the crown, almost dead and rotten as Prerogative, has grown up anew, with much more strength, and far less odium, under the name of Influence. An influence, which operated without noise and without violence; an influ-

* "Uxor Hugonis de Nevill dat Domino Regi ducentas Gallinas, eo quod possit jacere una nocte cum Domino suo Hugone de Nevill." Maddox, Hist. Exch. c. xiii. p. 326.

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ence which converted the very antagonist, into the instrument, of power; which contained in itself a perpetual principle of growth and renovation; and which the distresses and the prosperity of the country equally tended to augment, was an admirable substitute for a prerogative, that, being only the offspring of antiquated prejudices, had moulded in its original stamina irresistible principles of decay and dissolution. The ignorance of the people is a bottom but for a temporary system; the interest of active men in the state is a foundation perpetual and infallible. However, some circumstances, arising, it must be confessed, in a great degree from accident, prevented the effects of this influence for a long time from breaking out in a manner capable of exciting any serious apprehensions. Although government was strong and flourished exceedingly, the *court* had drawn far less advantage than one would imagine from this great source of power.

At the revolution, the crown, deprived, for the ends of the revolution itself, of many prerogatives, was found too weak to struggle against all the difficulties which pressed so new and unsettled a government. The court was obliged therefore to delegate a part of its powers to men of such interest as could support, and of such fidelity as would adhere to, its establishment. Such men were able to draw in a greater number to a concurrence in the common defence. This connexion, necessary at first, continued long after convenient; and properly conducted might indeed, in all situations, be an useful instrument of government. At the same time, through the intervention of men of popular weight and character, the people possessed a security for their just portion of importance in the state. But as the title to the crown grew stronger by long possession, and by the constant increase of its influence, these helps have of late seemed to certain persons no better than incumbrances. The powerful managers for government were not sufficiently submissive to the pleasure of the possessors of immediate and personal favour, sometimes from a confidence in their own strength natural and acquired; sometimes from a fear of offending their friends, and weakening that lead in the

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country, which gave them a consideration independent of the court. Men acted as if the court could receive, as well as confer, an obligation. The influence of government, thus divided in appearance between the court and the leaders of parties, became in many cases an accession rather to the popular than to the royal scale; and some part of that influence which would otherwise have been possessed as in a sort of mortmain and unalienable domain, returned again to the great ocean from whence it arose, and circulated among the people. This method therefore of governing, by men of great natural interest or great acquired consideration, was viewed in a very invidious light by the true lovers of absolute monarchy. It is the nature of despotism to abhor power held by any means but its own momentary pleasure; and to annihilate all intermediate situations between boundless strength on its own part, and total debility on the part of the people.

To get rid of all this intermediate and independent importance, and *to secure to the court the unlimited and uncontrouled use of its own vast influence, under the sole direction of its own private favour*, has for some years past been the great object of policy. If this were compassed, the influence of the crown must of course produce all the effects which the most sanguine partisans of the court could possibly desire. Government might then be carried on without any concurrence on the part of the people; without any attention to the dignity of the greater, or to the affections of the lower sorts. A new project was therefore devised, by a certain set of intriguing men, totally different from the system of administration which had prevailed since the accession of the House of Brunswick. This project, I have heard, was first conceived by some persons in the court of Frederick Prince of Wales.

The earliest attempt in the execution of this design was to set up for minister, a person, in rank indeed respectable, and very ample in fortune; but who, to the moment of this vast and sudden elevation, was little known or considered in the kingdom. To him the whole nation was to yield an immediate and implicit submission. But whether



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it was for want of firmness to bear up against the first opposition; or that things were not yet fully ripened, or that this method was not found the most eligible; that idea was soon abandoned. The instrumental part of the project was a little altered, to accommodate it to the time, and to bring things more gradually and more surely to the one great end proposed.

The first part of the reformed plan was to draw *a line which should separate the court from the ministry.* Hitherto these names had been looked upon as synonymous; but for the future, court and administration were to be considered as things totally distinct. By this operation, two systems of administration were to be formed; one which should be in the real secret and confidence; the other merely ostensible to perform the official and executory duties of government. The latter were alone to be responsible; whilst the real advisers, who enjoyed all the power, were effectually removed from all the danger.

Secondly, *A party under these leaders was to be formed in favour of the court against the ministry:* this party was to have a large share in the emoluments of government, and to hold it totally separate from, and independent of, ostensible administration.

The third point, and that on which the success of the whole scheme ultimately depended, was *to bring parliament to an acquiescence in this Project.* Parliament was therefore to be taught by degrees a total indifference to the persons, rank, influence, abilities, connexions, and character, of the ministers of the crown. By means of a discipline, on which I shall say more hereafter, that body was to be habituated to the most opposite interests, and the most discordant politicks. All connexions and dependencies among subjects were to be entirely dissolved. As hitherto business had gone through the hands of leaders of Whigs or Tories, men of talents to conciliate the people, and engage to their confidence, now the method was to be altered; and the lead was to be given to men of no sort of consideration or credit in the country. This want of natural importance was to be their very title to delegated power. Members of parlia-

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ment were to be hardened into an insensibility to pride as well as to duty. Those high and haughty sentiments, which are the great support of independence, were to be let down gradually. Point of honour and precedence were no more to be regarded in parliamentary decorum, than in a Turkish army. It was to be avowed as a constitutional maxim, that the king might appoint one of his footmen, or one of your footmen, for minister; and that he ought to be, and that he would be, as well followed as the first name for rank or wisdom in the nation. Thus parliament was to look on, as if perfectly unconcerned, while a cabal of the closet and backstairs was substituted in the place of a national administration.

With such a degree of acquiescence, any measure of any court might well be deemed thoroughly secure. The capital objects, and by much the most flattering characteristicks of arbitrary power, would be obtained. Every thing would be drawn from its holdings in the country to the personal favour and inclination of the prince. This favour would be the sole introduction to power, and the only tenure by which it was to be held: so that no person looking towards another, and all looking towards the court, it was impossible but that the motive which solely influenced every man's hopes must come in time to govern every man's conduct: till at last the servility became universal, in spite of the dead letter of any laws or institutions whatsoever.

How it should happen that any man could be tempted to venture upon such a project of government, may at first view appear surprising. But the fact is, that opportunities very inviting to such an attempt have offered; and the scheme itself was not destitute of some arguments not wholly unplausible to recommend it. These opportunities and these arguments, the use that has been made of both, the plan for carrying this new scheme of government into execution, and the effects which it has produced, are in my opinion worthy of our serious consideration.

His majesty came to the throne of these kingdoms with more advantages than any of his predecessors since the revolution. Fourth in descent, and third in succession of his

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royal family, even the zealots of hereditary right, in him, saw something to flatter their favourite prejudices; and to justify a transfer of their attachments, without a change in their principles. The person and cause of the Pretender were become contemptible; his title disowned throughout Europe, his party disbanded in England. His majesty came indeed to the inheritance of a mighty war; but, victorious in every part of the globe, peace was always in his power, not to negotiate, but to dictate. No foreign habitudes or attachments withdrew him from the cultivation of his power at home. His revenue for the civil establishment, fixed (as it was then thought) at a large, but definite sum, was ample, without being invidious. His influence, by additions from conquest, by an augmentation of debt, by an increase of military and naval establishment, much strengthened and extended. And coming to the throne in the prime and full vigour of youth, as from affection there was a strong dislike, so from dread there seemed to be a general averseness, from giving any thing like offence to a monarch, against whose resentment opposition could not look for a refuge in any sort of reversionary hope.

These singular advantages inspired his majesty only with a more ardent desire to preserve unimpaired the spirit of that national freedom, to which he owed a situation so full of glory. But to others it suggested sentiments of a very different nature. They thought they now beheld an opportunity (by a certain sort of statesmen never long undiscovered or unemployed) of drawing to themselves, by the aggrandizement of a court faction, a degree of power which they could never hope to derive from natural influence or from honourable service; and which it was impossible they could hold with the least security, whilst the system of administration rested upon its former bottom. In order to facilitate the execution of their design, it was necessary to make many alterations in political arrangement, and a signal change in the opinions, habits, and connexions of the greatest part of those who at that time acted in publick.

In the first place, they proceeded gradually, but not slowly, to destroy every thing of strength which did not derive

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its principal nourishment from the immediate pleasure of the court. The greatest weight of popular opinion and party connexion were then with the duke of Newcastle and Mr. Pitt. Neither of these held their importance by the *new tenure* of the court; they were not therefore thought to be so proper as others for the services which were required by that tenure. It happened very favourably for the new system, that under a forced coalition there rankled an incurable alienation and disgust between the parties which composed the administration. Mr. Pitt was first attacked. Not satisfied with removing him from power, they endeavoured by various artifices to ruin his character. The other party seemed rather pleased to get rid of so oppressive a support; not perceiving, that their own fall was prepared by his, and involved in it. Many other reasons prevented them from daring to look their true situation in the face. To the great Whig families it was extremely disagreeable, and seemed almost unnatural to oppose the administration of a prince of the house of Brunswick. Day after day they hesitated, and doubted, and lingered, expecting that other counsels would take place; and were slow to be persuaded, that all which had been done by the cabal, was the effect, not of humour, but of system. It was more strongly and evidently the interest of the new court faction, to get rid of the great Whig connexions, than to destroy Mr. Pitt. The power of that gentleman was vast indeed and merited; but it was in a great degree personal, and therefore transient. Theirs was rooted in the country. For, with a good deal less of popularity, they possessed a far more natural and fixed influence. Long possession of government; vast property; obligations of favours given and received; connexion of office; ties of blood, of alliance, of friendship (things at that time supposed of some force); the name of Whig, dear to the majority of the people; the zeal early begun and steadily continued to the royal family: all these together formed a body of power in the nation, which was criminal and devoted. The great ruling principle of the cabal, and that which animated and harmonized all their proceedings, how various soever they may have been, was to

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signify to the world, that the court would proceed upon its own proper forces only; and that the pretence of bringing any other into its service was an affront to it, and not a support. Therefore when the chiefs were removed, in order to go to the root, the whole party was put under a proscription, so general and severe as to take their hard-earned bread from the lowest officers, in a manner which had never been known before, even in general revolutions. But it was thought necessary effectually to destroy all dependencies but one; and to shew an example of the firmness and rigour with which the new system was to be supported.

Thus for the time were pulled down, in the persons of the Whig leaders and of Mr. Pitt (in spite of the services of the one at the accession of the royal family, and the recent services of the other in the war) the *two only securities for the importance of the people; power arising from popularity; and power arising from connexion.* Here and there indeed a few individuals were left standing who gave security for their total estrangement from the odious principles of party connexion and personal attachment; and it must be confessed that most of them have religiously kept their faith. Such a change could not however be made without a mighty shock to government.

To reconcile the minds of the people to all these movements, principles correspondent to them had been preached up with great zeal. Every one must remember that the cabal set out with the most astonishing prudery, both moral and political. Those who in a few months after soused over head and ears into the deepest and dirtiest pits of corruption, cried out violently against the indirect practices in the electing and managing of parliaments, which had formerly prevailed. This marvellous abhorrence which the court had suddenly taken to all influence, was not only circulated in conversation through the kingdom, but pompously announced to the publick, with many other extraordinary things in a pamphlet* which had all the appearance of a manifesto preparatory to some considerable enterprise. Throughout it

* Sentiments of an honest Man.

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was a satire, though in terms managed and decent enough, on the politicks of the former reign. It was indeed written with no small art and address.

In this piece appeared the first dawning of the new system; there first appeared the idea (then only in speculation) of *separating the court from the administration;* of carrying every thing from national connexion to personal regards; and of forming a regular party for that purpose, under the name of *king's men.*

To recommend this system to the people, a perspective view of the court gorgeously painted, and finely illuminated from within, was exhibited to the gaping multitude. Party was to be totally done away, with all its evil works. Corruption was to be cast down from court, as *Até* was from heaven. Power was thenceforward to be the chosen residence of publick spirit; and no one was to be supposed under any sinister influence, except those who had the misfortune to be in disgrace at court, which was to stand in lieu of all vices and all corruptions. A scheme of perfection to be realized in a monarchy far beyond the visionary republick of Plato. The whole scenery was exactly disposed to captivate those good souls, whose credulous morality is so invaluable a treasure to crafty politicians. Indeed there was wherewithal to charm every body, except those few who are not much pleased with professions of supernatural virtue, who know of what stuff such professions are made, for what purposes they are designed, and in what they are sure constantly to end. Many innocent gentlemen, who had been talking prose all their lives without knowing any thing of the matter, began at last to open their eyes upon their own merits, and to attribute their not having been lords of the treasury and lords of trade many years before, merely to the prevalence of party, and to the ministerial power, which had frustrated the good intentions of the court in favour of their abilities. Now was the time to unlock the sealed fountain of royal bounty, which had been infamously monopolized and huckstered, and to let it flow at large upon the whole people. The time was come, to restore royalty to its original splendour. *Mettre le Roy hors de page*, became a sort

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of watch-word. And it was constantly in the mouths of all the runners of the court, that nothing could preserve the balance of the constitution from being overturned by the rabble, or by a faction of the nobility, but to free the sovereign effectually from that ministerial tyranny under which the royal dignity had been oppressed in the person of his majesty's grandfather.

These were some of the many artifices used to reconcile the people to the great change which was made in the persons who composed the ministry, and the still greater which was made and avowed in its constitution. As to individuals, other methods were employed with them; in order so thoroughly to disunite every party, and even every family, that *no concert, order, or effect, might appear in any future opposition.* And in this manner an administration without connexion with the people, or with one another, was first put in possession of government. What good consequences followed from it, we have all seen; whether with regard to virtue, publick or private; to the ease and happiness of the sovereign; or to the real strength of government. But as so much stress was then laid on the necessity of this new project, it will not be amiss to take a view of the effects of this royal servitude and vile durance, which was so deplored in the reign of the late monarch, and was so carefully to be avoided in the reign of his successor. The effects were these.

In times full of doubt and danger to his person and family, George the Second maintained the dignity of his crown connected with the liberty of his people, not only unimpaired, but improved, for the space of thirty-three years. He overcame a dangerous rebellion, abetted by foreign force, and raging in the heart of his kingdoms; and thereby destroyed the seeds of all future rebellion that could arise upon the same principle. He carried the glory, the power, the commerce of England, to an height unknown even to this renowned nation in the times of its greatest prosperity: and he left his succession resting on the true and only true foundations of all national and all regal greatness; affection at home, reputation abroad, trust in allies, terrour in rival

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nations. The most ardent lover of his country cannot wish for Great Britain a happier fate than to continue as she was then left. A people emulous as we are in affection to our present sovereign, know not how to form a prayer to heaven for a greater blessing upon his virtues, or a higher state of felicity and glory, than that he should live, and should reign, and, when Providence ordains it, should die, exactly like his illustrious predecessor.

A great prince may be obliged (though such a thing cannot happen very often) to sacrifice his private inclination to his publick interest. A wise prince will not think that such a restraint implies a condition of servility; and truly, if such was the condition of the last reign, and the effects were also such as we have described, we ought, no less for the sake of the sovereign whom we love, than for our own, to hear arguments convincing indeed, before we depart from the maxims of that reign, or fly in the face of this great body of strong and recent experience.

One of the principal topicks which was then, and has been since, much employed by that political school,* is an affectual terrour of the growth of an aristocratick power, prejudicial to the rights of the crown, and the balance of the constitution. Any new powers exercised in the house of lords, or in the house of commons, or by the crown, ought certainly to excite the vigilant and anxious jealousy of a free people. Even a new and unprecedented course of action in the whole legislature, without great and evident reason, may be a subject of just uneasiness. I will not affirm, that there may not have lately appeared in the house of lords a disposition to some attempts derogatory to the legal rights of the subject. If any such have really appeared, they have arisen, not from a power properly aristocratick, but from the same influence which is charged with having excited attempts of a similar nature in the house of commons; which house, if it should have been betrayed into an unfortunate quarrel with its constituents, and involved in a charge of the very same nature, could have neither

* See the political writings of the late Dr. Brown, and many others.



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power nor inclination to repel such attempts in others. Those attempts in the house of lords can no more be called aristocratick proceedings, than the proceedings with regard to the county of Middlesex in the house of commons can with any sense be called democratical.

It is true, that the peers have a great influence in the kingdom, and in every part of the publick concerns. While they are men of property, it is impossible to prevent it, except by such means as must prevent all property from its natural operation: an event not easily to be compassed, while property is power; nor by any means to be wished, while the least notion exists of the method by which the spirit of liberty acts, and of the means by which it is preserved. If any particular peers, by their uniform, upright, constitutional conduct, by their publick and their private virtues, have acquired an influence in the country; the people, on whose favour that influence depends, and from whom it arose, will never be duped into an opinion, that such greatness in a peer is the despotism of an aristocracy, when they know and feel it to be the effect and pledge of their own importance.

I am no friend to aristocracy, in the sense at least in which that word is usually understood. If it were not a bad habit to moot cases on the supposed ruin of the constitution, I should be free to declare, that if it must perish, I would rather by far see it resolved in any other form, than lost in that austere and insolent domination. But, whatever my dislikes may be, my fears are not upon that quarter. The question, on the influence of a court, and of a peerage, is not, which of the two dangers is the most eligible, but which is the most imminent. He is but a poor observer, who has not seen, that the generality of peers, far from supporting themselves in a state of independent greatness, are but too apt to fall into an oblivion of their proper dignity, and to run headlong into an abject servitude. Would to God it were true, that the fault of our peers were too much spirit! It is worthy of some observation, that these gentlemen, so jealous of aristocracy, make no complaints of the power of those peers (neither few nor inconsiderable) who are always in the train of a court, and whose whole weight must be cor-

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sidered as a portion of the settled influence of the crown. This is all safe and right; but if some peers (I am very sorry they are not as many as they ought to be) set themselves, in the great concern of peers and commons, against a back-stairs influence and clandestine government, then the alarm begins; then the constitution is in danger of being forced into an aristocracy.

I rest a little longer on this court topick, because it was much insisted upon at the time of the great change, and has been since frequently revived by many of the agents of that party: for, whilst they are terrifying the great and opulent with the horrours of mob-government, they are by other managers attempting (though hitherto with little success) to alarm the people with a phantom of tyranny in the nobles. All this is done upon their favourite principle of disunion, of sowing jealousies amongst the different orders of the state, and of disjointing the natural strength of the kingdom; that it may be rendered incapable of resisting the sinister designs of wicked men, who have engrossed the royal power.

Thus much of the topicks chosen by the courtiers to recommend their system; it will be necessary to open a little more at large the nature of that party which was formed for its support. Without this, the whole would have been no better than a visionary amusement, like the scheme of Harrington's political club, and not a business in which the nation had a real concern. As a powerful party, and a party constructed on a new principle, it is a very inviting object of curiosity.

It must be remembered, that since the revolution, until the period we are speaking of, the influence of the crown had been always employed in supporting the ministers of state, and in carrying on the publick business according to their opinions. But the party now in question is formed upon a very different idea. It is to intercept the favour, protection and confidence of the crown in the passage to its ministers; it is to come between them and their importance in parliament; it is to separate them from all their natural and acquired dependencies; it is intended as the controul,

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not the support, of administration. The machinery of this system is perplexed in its movements, and false in its principle. It is formed on a supposition that the king is something external to his government; and that he may be honoured and aggrandized, even by its debility and disgrace. The plan proceeds expressly on the idea of enfeebling the regular executory power. It proceeds on the idea of weakening the state in order to strengthen the court. The scheme depending entirely on distrust, on disconnexion, on mutability by principle, on systematick weakness in every particular member; it is impossible that the total result should be substantial strength of any kind.

As a foundation of their scheme, the cabal have established a sort of *rota* in the court. All sorts of parties, by this means, have been brought into administration, from whence few have had the good fortune to escape without disgrace; none at all without considerable losses. In the beginning of each arrangement no professions of confidence and support are wanting, to induce the leading men to engage. But while the ministers of the day appear in all the pomp and pride of power, while they have all their canvass spread out to the wind, and every sail filled with the fair and prosperous gale of royal favour, in a short time they find, they know not how, a current, which sets directly against them; which prevents all progress; and even drives them backwards. They grow ashamed and mortified in a situation, which, by its vicinity to power, only serves to remind them the more strongly of their insignificance. They are obliged either to execute the orders of their inferiours, or to see themselves opposed by the natural instruments of their office. With the loss of their dignity they lose their temper. In their turn they grow troublesome to that cabal which, whether it supports or opposes, equally disgraces and equally betrays them. It is soon found necessary to get rid of the heads of administration; but it is of the heads only. As there always are many rotten members belonging to the best connexions, it is not hard to persuade several to continue in office without ther leaders. By this means the party goes out much thinner than it came in; and is only reduced in

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strength by its temporary possession of power. Besides, if by accident, or in course of changes, that power should be recovered, the junto have thrown up a retrenchment of these carcasses, which may serve to cover themselves in a day of danger. They conclude, not unwisely, that such rotten members will become the first objects of disgust and resentment to their ancient connexions.

They contrive to form in the outward administration two parties at the least; which, whilst they are tearing one another to pieces, are both competitors for the favour and protection of the cabal; and, by their emulation, contribute to throw every thing more and more into the hands of the interiour managers.

A minister of state will sometimes keep himself totally estranged from all his colleagues; will differ from them in their councils, will privately traverse, and publickly oppose, their measures. He will, however, continue in his employment. Instead of suffering any mark of displeasure, he will be distinguished by an unbounded profusion of court rewards and caresses; because he does what is expected, and all that is expected, from men in office. He helps to keep some form of administration in being, and keeps it at the same time as weak and divided as possible.

However, we must take care not to be mistaken, or to imagine that such persons have any weight in their opposition. When, by them, administration is convinced of its insignificancy, they are soon to be convinced of their own. They never are suffered to succeed in their opposition. They and the world are to be satisfied, that, neither office, nor authority, nor property, nor ability, eloquence, counsel, skill, or union, are of the least importance; but that the mere influence of the court, naked of all support, and destitute of all management, is abundantly sufficient for all its own purposes.

When any adverse connexion is to be destroyed, the cabal seldom appear in the work themselves. They find out some person of whom the party entertains an high opinion. Such a person they endeavour to delude with various pretences. They teach him first to distrust, and then to quar-

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rel with his friends; among whom, by the same arts, they excite a similar diffidence of him; so that in this mutual fear and distrust, he may suffer himself to be employed as the instrument in the change which is brought about. Afterwards they are sure to destroy him in his turn, by setting up in his place some person in whom he had himself reposed the greatest confidence, and who serves to carry off a considerable part of his adherents.

When such a person has broke in this manner with his connexions, he is soon compelled to commit some flagrant act of iniquitous personal hostility against some of them (such as an attempt to strip a particular friend of his family estate), by which the cabal hope to render the parties utterly irreconcilable. In truth, they have so contrived matters, that people have a greater hatred to the subordinate instruments than to the principal movers.

As in destroying their enemies they make use of instruments not immediately belonging to their corps, so in advancing their own friends they pursue exactly the same method. To promote any of them to considerable rank or emolument, they commonly take care that the recommendation shall pass through the hands of the ostensible ministry: such a recommendation might however appear to the world, as some proof of the credit of ministers, and some means of increasing their strength. To prevent this, the persons so advanced are directed, in all companies, industriously to declare, that they are under no obligations whatsoever to administration; that they have received their office from another quarter; that they are totally free and independent.

When the faction has any job of lucre to obtain, or of vengeance to perpetrate, their way is, to select, for the execution, those very persons to whose habits, friendships, principles, and declarations, such proceedings are publickly known to be the most adverse; at once to render the instruments the more odious, and therefore the more dependent, and to prevent the people from ever reposing a confidence in any appearance of private friendship, or publick principle.

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If the administration seem now and then, from remissness, or from fear of making themselves disagreeable, to suffer any popular excesses to go unpunished, the cabal immediately sets up some creature of theirs to raise a clamour against the ministers, as having shamefully betrayed the dignity of government. Then they compel the ministry to become active in conferring rewards and honours on the persons who have been the instruments of their disgrace; and, after having first vilified them with the higher orders for suffering the laws to sleep over the licentiousness of the populace, they drive them (in order to make amends for their former inactivity) to some act of atrocious violence, which renders them completely abhorred by the people. They who remember the riots which attended the Middlesex election; the opening of the present parliament; and the transactions relative to Saint George's Fields, will not be at a loss for an application of these remarks.

That this body may be enabled to compass all the ends of its institution, its members are scarcely ever to aim at the high and responsible offices of the state. They are distributed with art and judgment through all the secondary, but efficient, departments of office, and through the households of all the branches of the royal family: so as on one hand to occupy all the avenues to the throne; and on the other to forward or frustrate the execution of any measure, according to their own interests. For with the credit and support which they are known to have, though for the greater part in places which are only a genteel excuse for salary, they possess all the influence of the highest post; and they dictate publickly in almost every thing, even with a parade of superiority. Whenever they dissent (as it often happens) from their nominal leaders, the trained part of the senate, instinctively in the secret, is sure to follow them; provided the leaders, sensible of their situation, do not of themselves recede in time from their most declared opinions. This latter is generally the case. It will not be conceivable to any one who has not seen it, what pleasure is taken by the cabal in rendering these heads of office thoroughly contemptible and ridiculous. And when they are become so, they have then the best chance for being well supported.

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The members of the court faction are fully indemnified for not holding places on the slippery heights of the kingdom, not only by the lead in all affairs, but also by the perfect security in which they enjoy less conspicuous, but very advantageous situations. Their places are in express legal tenure, or in effect, all of them for life. Whilst the first and most respectable persons in the kingdom are tossed about like tennis balls, the sport of a blind and insolent caprice, no minister dares even to cast an oblique glance at the lowest of their body. If an attempt be made upon one of this corps, immediately he flies to sanctuary, and pretends to the most inviolable of all promises. No conveniency of publick arrangement is available to remove any one of them from the specifick situation he holds; and the slightest attempt upon one of them, by the most powerful minister, is a certain preliminary to his own destruction.

Conscious of their independence, they bear themselves with a lofty air to the exterior ministers. Like Janissaries, they derive a kind of freedom from the very condition of their servitude. They may act just as they please; provided they are true to the great ruling principle of their institution. It is, therefore, not at all wonderful, that people should be so desirous of adding themselves to that body, in which they may possess and reconcile satisfactions the most alluring, and seemingly the most contradictory; enjoying at once all the spirited pleasure of independence, and all the gross lucre and fat emoluments of servitude.

Here is a sketch, though a slight one, of the constitution, laws, and policy, of this new court corporation. The name by which they choose to distinguish themselves, is that of *king's men*, or the *king's friends*, by an invidious exclusion of the rest of his Majesty's most loyal and affectionate subjects. The whole system, comprehending the exterior and interiour administrations is commonly called in the technical language of the court, *double cabinet;* in French or English, as you choose to pronounce it.

Whether all this be a vision of a distracted brain, or the invention of a malicious heart, or a real faction in the country, must be judged by the appearances which things have

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worn for eight years past. Thus far I am certain, that there is not a single publick man, in or out of office, who has not, at some time or other, borne testimony to the truth of what I have now related. In particular, no persons have been more strong in their assertions, and louder and more indecent in their complaints, than those who compose all the exterior part of the present administration; in whose time that faction has arrived at such an height of power, and of boldness in the use of it, as may, in the end, perhaps bring about its total destruction.

It is true, that about four years ago, during the administration of the Marquis of Rockingham, an attempt was made to carry on government without their concurrence. However, this was only a transient cloud; they were hid but for a moment; and their constellation blazed out with greater brightness, and a far more vigorous influence, some time after it was blown over. An attempt was at that time made (but without any idea of proscription) to break their corps, to discountenance their doctrines, to revive connexions of a different kind, to restore the principles and policy of the Whigs, to reanimate the cause of liberty by ministerial countenance; and then for the first time were men seen attached in office to every principle they had maintained in opposition. No one will doubt, that such men were abhorred and violently opposed by the court faction, and that such a system could have but a short duration.

It may appear somewhat affected, that in so much discourse upon this extraordinary party, I should say so little of the Earl of Bute, who is the supposed head of it. But this was neither owing to affectation nor inadvertence. I have carefully avoided the introduction of personal reflections of any kind. Much the greater part of the topicks which have been used to blacken this nobleman, are either unjust or frivolous. At best, they have a tendency to give the resentment of this bitter calamity a wrong direction, and to turn a publick grievance into a mean, personal, or a dangerous national quarrel. Where there is a regular scheme of operations carried on, it is the system, and not



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any individual person who acts in it, that is truly dangerous. This system has not arisen solely from the ambition of Lord Bute, but from the circumstances which favoured it, and from an indifference to the constitution which had been for some time growing among our gentry. We should have been tried with it, if the Earl of Bute had never existed; and it will want neither a contriving head nor active members, when the Earl of Bute exists no longer. It is not, therefore, to rail at Lord Bute, but firmly to embody against this court party and its practices, which can afford us any prospect of relief in our present condition.

Another motive induces me to put the personal consideration of Lord Bute, wholly out of the question. He communicates very little in a direct manner with the greater part of our men of business. This has never been his custom. It is enough for him that he surrounds them with his creatures. Several imagine, therefore, that they have a very good excuse for doing all the work of this faction, when they have no personal connexion with Lord Bute. But whoever becomes a party to an administration, composed of insulated individuals, without faith plighted, tie, or common principle; an administration constitutionally impotent, because supported by no party in the nation; he who contributes to destroy the connexions of men and their trust in one another, or in any sort to throw the dependence of publick counsels upon private will and favour, possibly may have nothing to do with the Earl of Bute. It matters little whether he be the friend or the enemy of that particular person. But let him be who or what he will, he abets a faction that is driving hard to the ruin of his country. He is sapping the foundation of its liberty, disturbing the sources of its domestick tranquillity, weakening its government over its dependencies, degrading it from all its importance in the system of Europe.

It is this unnatural infusion of a *system of favouritism* into a government which in a great part of its constitution is popular, that has raised the present ferment in the nation. The people, without entering deeply into its prin-

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ciples, could plainly perceive its effects, in much violence, in a great spirit of innovation, and a general disorder in all the functions of government. I keep my eye solely on this system; if I speak of those measures which have arisen from it, it will be so far only as they illustrate the general scheme. This is the fountain of all those bitter waters of which, through an hundred different conduits, we have drunk until we are ready to burst. The discretionary power of the crown in the formation of ministry, abused by bad or weak men, has given rise to a system, which, without directly violating the letter of any law, operates against the spirit of the whole constitution.

A plan of favouritism for our executory government is essentially at variance with the plan of our legislature. One great end undoubtedly of a mixed government like ours, composed of monarchy, and of controuls, on the part of the higher people and the lower, is, that the prince shall not be able to violate the laws. This is useful indeed and fundamental. But this, even at first view, is no more than a negative advantage; an armour merely defensive. It is therefore next in order, and equal in importance, *that the discretionary powers which are necessarily vested in the monarch, whether for the execution of the laws, or for the nomination to magistracy and office, or for conducting the affairs of peace and war, or for ordering the revenue, should all be exercised upon publick principles and national grounds, and not on the likings or prejudices, the intrigues or policies, of a court.* This, I said, is equal in importance to the securing a government according to law. The laws reach but a very little way. Constitute government how you please, infinitely the greater part of it must depend upon the exercise of the powers which are left at large to the prudence and uprightness of ministers of state. Even all the use and potency of the laws depends upon them. Without them, your commonwealth is no better than a scheme upon paper; and not a living, active, effective constitution. It is possible, that through negligence, or ignorance, or design artfully conducted, ministers may suffer one part of government to

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languish, another to be perverted from its purposes, and every valuable interest of the country to fall into ruin and decay, without possibility of fixing any single act on which a criminal prosecution can be justly grounded. The due arrangement of men in the active part of the state, far from being foreign to the purposes of a wise government, ought to be among its very first and dearest objects. When, therefore, the abettors of the new system tell us, that between them and their opposers there is nothing but a struggle for power, and that therefore we are no ways concerned in it; we must tell those who have the impudence to insult us in this manner, that of all things we ought to be the most concerned, who and what sort of men they are, that hold the trust of every thing that is dear to us. Nothing can render this a point of indifference to the nation, but what must either render us totally desperate, or sooth us into the security of ideots. We must soften into a credulity below the milkiness of infancy, to think all men virtuous. We must be tainted with a malignity truly diabolical, to believe all the world to be equally wicked and corrupt. Men are *in* publick life as in private, some good, some evil. The elevation of the one, and the depression of the other, are the first objects of all true policy. But that form of government, which, neither in its direct institutions, nor in their immediate tendency, has contrived to throw its affairs into the most trust-worthy hands, but has left its whole executory system to be disposed of agreeably to the uncontrouled pleasure of any one man, however excellent or virtuous, is a plan of polity defective not only in that member, but consequentially erroneous in every part of it.

In arbitrary governments, the constitution of the ministry follows the constitution of the legislature. Both the law and the magistrate are the creatures of will. It must be so. Nothing, indeed, will appear more certain, on any tolerable consideration of this matter, than that *every sort of government ought to have its administration correspondent to its legislature.* If it should be otherwise, things must fall into an hideous disorder. The people of a free commonwealth, who have taken such care that their laws should be the re-

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sult of general consent, cannot be so senseless as to suffer their executory system to be composed of persons on whom they have no dependence, and whom no proofs of the publick love and confidence have recommended to those powers, upon the use of which the very being of the state depends.

The popular election of magistrates, and popular disposition of rewards and honours, is one of the first advantages of a free state. Without it, or something equivalent to it, perhaps the people cannot long enjoy the substance of freedom; certainly none of the vivifying energy of good government. The frame of our commonwealth did not admit of such an actual election; but it provided as well, and (while the spirit of the constitution is preserved) better for all the effects of it than by the method of suffrage in any democratick state whatsoever. It had always, until of late, been held the first duty of Parliament, *to refuse to support Government, until power was in the hands of persons who were acceptable to the people, or while factions predominated in the Court in which the nation had no confidence.* Thus all the good effects of popular election were supposed to be secured to us, without the mischiefs attending on perpetual intrigue, and a distinct canvass for every particular office throughout the body of the people. This was the most noble and refined part of our constitution. The people, by their representatives and grandees, were intrusted with a deliberative power in making laws; the king with the controul of his negative. The king was intrusted with the deliberative choice and the election to office; the people had the negative in a parliamentary refusal to support. Formerly this power of controul was what kept ministers in awe of parliaments, and parliaments in reverence with the people. If the use of this power of controul on the system and persons of administration is gone, every thing is lost, parliament and all. We may assure ourselves, that if parliament will tamely see evil men take possession of all the strong holds of their country, and allow them time and means to fortify themselves, under a pretence of giving them a fair trial, and upon a hope of discovering, whether they will not be reformed by power, and whether their measures will not be better than their mo-

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rals; such a parliament will give countenance to their measures also, whatever that parliament may pretend, and whatever those measures may be.

Every good political institution must have a preventive operation as well as a remedial. It ought to have a natural tendency to exclude bad men from government, and not to trust for the safety of the state to subsequent punishment alone: punishment, which has ever been tardy and uncertain; and which, when power is suffered in bad hands, may chance to fall rather on the injured than the criminal.

Before men are put forward into the great trusts of the state, they ought by their conduct to have obtained such a degree of estimation in their country, as may be some sort of pledge and security to the publick, that they will not abuse those trusts. It is no mean security for a proper use of power, that a man has shewn by the general tenour of his actions, that the affection, the good opinion, the confidence, of his fellow citizens have been among the principal objects of his life; and that he has owed none of the degradations of his power or fortune to a settled contempt, or occasional forfeiture of their esteem.

That man who before he comes into power has no friends, or who coming into power is obliged to desert his friends, or who losing it has no friends to sympathize with him; he who has no sway among any part of the landed or commercial interest, but whose whole importance has begun with his office, and is sure to end with it; is a person who ought never to be suffered by a controuling parliament to continue in any of those situations which confer the lead and direction of all our publick affairs; because such a man *has no connexion with the interest of the people.*

Those knots or cabals of men who have got together, avowedly without any publick principle, in order to sell their conjunct iniquity at the higher rate, and are therefore universally odious, ought never to be suffered to domineer in the state; because they have *no connexion with the sentiments and opinions of the people.*

These are considerations which in my opinion enforce the necessity of having some better reason, in a free country,

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and a free parliament, for supporting the ministers of the crown, than that short one, *That the king has thought proper to appoint them.* There is something very courtly in this. But it is a principle pregnant with all sorts of mischief, in a constitution like ours, to turn the views of active men from the country to the court. Whatever be the road to power, that is the road which will be trod. If the opinion of the country be of no use as a means of power or consideration, the qualities which usually procure that opinion will be no longer cultivated. And whether it will be right, in a state so popular in its constitution as ours, to leave ambition without popular motives, and to trust all to the operation of pure virtue in the minds of kings and ministers, and publick men, must be submitted to the judgment and good sense of the people of England.

Cunning men are here apt to break in, and, without directly controverting the principle, to raise objections from the difficulty under which the sovereign labours, to distinguish the genuine voice and sentiments of his people, from the clamour of a faction, by which it is so easily counterfeited. The nation, they say, is generally divided into parties, with views and passions utterly irreconcilable. If the king should put his affairs into the hands of any one of them, he is sure to disgust the rest; if he select particular men from among them all, it is an hazard that he disgusts them all. Those who are left out, however divided before, will soon run into a body of opposition; which, being a collection of many discontents into one focus, will without doubt be hot and violent enough. Faction will make its cries resound through the nation, as if the whole were in an uproar, when by far the majority, and much the better part, will seem for a while as it were annihilated by the quiet in which their virtue and moderation incline them to enjoy the blessings of government. Besides that the opinion of the mere vulgar is a miserable rule even with regard to themselves, on account of their violence and instability. So that if you were to gratify them in their humour to-day, that very gratification would be a ground of their dissatisfaction on the next. Now as all these rules of publick opin-

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ion are to be collected with great difficulty, and to be applied with equal uncertainty as to the effect, what better can a king of England do, than to employ such men as he finds to have views and inclinations most conformable to his own; who are least infected with pride and self-will, and who are least moved by such popular humours as are perpetually traversing his designs, and disturbing his service; trusting that, when he means no ill to his people, he will be supported in his appointments, whether he chooses to keep or to change, as his private judgment or his pleasure leads him? He will find a sure resource in the real weight and influence of the crown, when it is not suffered to become an instrument in the hands of a faction.

I will not pretend to say that there is nothing at all in this mode of reasoning; because I will not assert that there is no difficulty in the art of government. Undoubtedly the very best administration must encounter a great deal of opposition; and the very worst will find more support than it deserves. Sufficient appearances will never be wanting to those who have a mind to deceive themselves. It is a fallacy in constant use with those who would level all things, and confound right with wrong, to insist upon the inconveniences which are attached to every choice, without taking into consideration the different weight and consequence of those inconveniences. The question is not concerning *absolute* discontent or *perfect* satisfaction in government; neither of which can be pure and unmixed at any time, or upon any system. The controversy is about that degree of good-humour in the people, which may possibly be attained, and ought certainly to be looked for. While some politicians may be waiting to know whether the sense of every individual be against them, accurately distinguishing the vulgar from the better sort, drawing lines between the enterprises of a faction and the efforts of a people, they may chance to see the government, which they are so nicely weighing and dividing, and distinguishing, tumble to the ground in the midst of their wise deliberation. Prudent men, when so great an object as the security of government, or even its peace, is at stake, will not run the risk of a decision which may be

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fatal to it. They who can read the political sky will see a hurricane in a cloud no bigger than a hand at the very edge of the horizon, and will run into the first harbour. No lines can be laid down for civil or political wisdom. They are a matter incapable of exact definition. But, though no man can draw a stroke between the confines of day and night, yet light and darkness are upon the whole tolerably distinguishable. Nor will it be impossible for a prince to find out such a mode of government, and such persons to administer it, as will give a great degree of content to his people; without any curious and anxious research for that abstract, universal, perfect harmony, which, while he is seeking, he abandons those means of ordinary tranquillity which are in his power without any research at all.

It is not more the duty than it is the interest of a prince, to aim at giving tranquillity to his government. But those who advise him may have an interest in disorder and confusion. If the opinion of the people is against them, they will naturally wish that it should have no prevalence. Here it is that the people must on their part shew themselves sensible of their own value. Their whole importance, in the first instance, and afterwards their whole freedom, is at stake. Their freedom cannot long survive their importance. Here it is that the natural strength of the kingdom, the great peers, the leading landed gentlemen, the opulent merchants and manufacturers, the substantial yeomanry, must interpose, to rescue their prince, themselves, and their posterity.

We are at present at issue upon this point. We are in the great crisis of this contention; and the part which men take one way or other, will serve to discriminate their characters and their principles. Until the matter is decided, the country will remain in its present confusion. For while a system of administration is attempted, entirely repugnant to the genius of the people, and not conformable to the plan of their government, every thing must necessarily be disordered for a time, until this system destroys the constitution, or the constitution gets the better of this system.



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There is in my opinion, a peculiar venom and malignity in this political distemper beyond any that I have heard or read of. In former times the projectors of arbitrary government attacked only the liberties of their country; a design surely mischievous enough to have satisfied a mind of the most unruly ambition. But a system unfavourable to freedom may be so formed, as considerably to exalt the grandeur of the state; and men may find in the pride and splendour of that prosperity some sort of consolation for the loss of their solid privileges. Indeed the increase of the power of the state has often been urged by artful men, as a pretext for some abridgment of the publick liberty. But the scheme of the junto under consideration, not only strikes a palsy into every nerve of our free constitution, but in the same degree benumbs and stupifies the whole executive power; rendering government in all its grand operations languid, uncertain, ineffective; making ministers fearful of attempting, and incapable of executing, any useful plan of domestick arrangement, or of foreign politicks. It tends to produce neither the security of a free government, nor the energy of a monarchy that is absolute. Accordingly the crown has dwindled away, in proportion to the unnatural and turgid growth of this excrescence on the court.

The interiour ministry are sensible, that war is a situation which sets in its full light the value of the hearts of a people; and they well know, that the beginning of the importance of the people must be the end of theirs. For this reason they discover upon all occasions the utmost fear of every thing, which by possibility may lead to such an event. I do not mean that they manifest any of that pious fear which is backward to commit the safety of the country to the dubious experiment of war. Such a fear, being the tender sensation of virtue, excited, as it is regulated, by reason, frequently shews itself in a seasonable boldness, which keeps danger at a distance, by seeming to despise it. Their fear betrays to the first glance of the eye, its true cause, and its real object. Foreign powers, confident in the knowledge of their character, have not scrupled to violate the most so-

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lemn treaties; and, in defiance of them to make conquests in the midst of a general peace, and in the heart of Europe. Such was the conquest of Corsica, by the professed enemies of the freedom of mankind, in defiance of those who were formerly its professed defenders. We have had just claims upon the same powers: rights which ought to have been sacred to them as well as to us, as they had their origin in our lenity and generosity towards France and Spain in the day of their great humiliation. Such I call the ransom of Manilla, and the demand on France for the East India prisoners. But these powers put a just confidence in their resource of the *double cabinet*. These demands (one of them at least) are hastening fast towards an acquittal by prescription. Oblivion begins to spread her cobwebs over all our spirited remonstrances. Some of the most valuable branches of our trade are also on the point of perishing from the same cause. I do not mean those branches which bear without the hand of the vine-dresser; I mean those which the policy of treaties had formerly secured to us; I mean to mark and distinguish the trade of Portugal, the loss of which, and the power of the cabal, have one and the same æra.

If, by any chance, the ministers who stand before the curtain, possess or affect any spirit, it makes little or no impression. Foreign courts and ministers, who were among the first to discover and to profit by this invention of the *double cabinet*, attend very little to their remonstrances. They know that those shadows of ministers have nothing to do in the ultimate disposal of things. Jealousies and animosities are sedulously nourished in the outward administration, and have been even considered as a *causa sine qua non* in its constitution; thence foreign courts have a certainty, that nothing can be done by common counsel in this nation. If one of those ministers officially takes up a business with spirit, it serves only the better to signalize the meanness of the rest, and the discord of them all. His colleagues in office are in haste to shake him off, and to disclaim the whole of his proceedings. Of this nature was that astonishing transaction, in which Lord Rochford, our ambassador at

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Paris, remonstrated against the attempt upon Corsica, in consequence of a direct authority from Lord Shelburne. This remonstrance the French minister treated with the contempt that was natural; as he was assured, from the ambassador of his court to ours, that these orders of Lord Shelburne were not supported by the rest of the (I had like to have said British) administration. Lord Rochford, a man of spirit, could not endure this situation. The consequences were, however, curious. He returns from Paris, and comes home full of anger. Lord Shelburne, who gave the orders, is obliged to give up the seals. Lord Rochford, who obeyed these orders, receives them. He goes, however, into another department of the same office, that he might not be obliged officially to acquiesce in one situation under what he had officially remonstrated against in another. At Paris, the Duke of Choiseul considered this office arrangement as a compliment to him: here it was spoken of as an attention to the delicacy of Lord Rochford. But whether the compliment was to one or both, to this nation it was the same. By this transaction the condition of our court lay exposed in all its nakedness. Our office correspondence has lost all pretence to authenticity; British policy is brought into derision in those nations, that a while ago trembled at the power of our arms, whilst they looked up with confidence to the equity, firmness, and candour, which shone in all our negotiations. I represent this matter exactly in the light in which it has been universally received.

Such has been the aspect of our foreign politicks, under the influence of a *double cabinet*. With such an arrangement at court, it is impossible it should have been otherwise. Nor is it possible that this scheme should have a better effect upon the government of our dependencies, the first, the dearest, and most delicate objects, of the interiour policy of this empire. The colonies know, that administration is separated from the court, divided within itself, and detested by the nation. The *double cabinet* has, in both the parts of it, shewn the most malignant dispositions towards them, without being able to do them the smallest mischief.

They are convinced, by sufficient experience, that no plan,

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either of lenity or rigour, can be pursued with uniformity and perseverance. Therefore they turn their eyes entirely from Great Britain, where they have neither dependence on friendship, nor apprehension from enmity. They look to themselves, and their own arrangements. They grow every day into alienation from this country; and whilst they are becoming disconnected with our government, we have not the consolation to find, that they are even friendly in their new independence. Nothing can equal the futility, the weakness, the rashness, the timidity, the perpetual contradiction, in the management of our affairs in that part of the world. A volume might be written on this melancholy subject; but it were better to leave it entirely to the reflections of the reader himself than not to treat it in the extent it deserves.

In what manner our domestick œconomy is affected by this system, it is needless to explain. It is the perpetual subject of their own complaints.

The court party resolve the whole into faction. Having said something before upon this subject, I shall only observe here, that when they give this account of the prevalence of faction, they present no very favourable aspect of the confidence of the people in their own government. They may be assured, that however they amuse themselves with a variety of projects for substituting something else in the place of that great and only foundation of government, the confidence of the people, every attempt will but make their condition worse. When men imagine that their food is only a cover for poison, and when they neither love nor trust the hand that serves it, it is not the name of the roast beef of Old England, that will persuade them to sit down to the table that is spread for them. When the people conceive that laws, and tribunals, and even popular assemblies, are perverted from the ends of their institution, they find in those names of degenerated establishments only new motives to discontent. Those bodies, which, when full of life and beauty, lay in their arms, and were their joy and comfort, when dead and putrid, become but the more loathsome from remembrance of former endearments. A sullen gloom and fu-

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rious disorder, prevail by fits; the nation loses its relish for peace and prosperity, as it did in that season of fulness which opened our troubles in the time of Charles the First. A species of men to whom a state of order would become a sentence of obscurity, are nourished into a dangerous magnitude by the heat of intestine disturbances; and it is no wonder that, by a sort of sinister piety, they cherish in their turn, the disorders which are the parents of all their consequence. Superficial observers consider such persons as the cause of the publick uneasiness, when, in truth, they are nothing more than the effect of it. Good men look upon this distracted scene with sorrow and indignation. Their hands are tied behind them. They are despoiled of all the power which might enable them to reconcile the strength of government with the rights of the people. They stand in a most distressing alternative. But in the election among evils they hope better things from temporary confusion, than from established servitude. In the mean time, the voice of law is not to be heard. Fierce licentiousness begets violent restraints. The military arm is the sole reliance; and then, call your constitution what you please, it is the sword that governs. The civil power, like every other that calls in the aid of an ally stronger than itself, perishes by the assistance it receives. But the contrivers of this scheme of government will not trust solely to the military power; because they are cunning men. Their restless and crooked spirit drives them to rake in the dirt of every kind of expedient. Unable to rule the multitude, they endeavour to raise divisions amongst them. One mob is hired to destroy another; a procedure which at once encourages the boldness of the populace, and justly increases their discontent. Men become pensioners of state on account of their abilities in the array of riot, and the discipline of confusion. Government is put under the disgraceful necessity of protecting from the severity of the laws that very licentiousness, which the laws had been before violated to repress. Every thing partakes of the original disorder. Anarchy predominates without freedom, and servitude without submission or subordination. These are the consequences inevitable to our

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publick peace, from the scheme of rendering the executory government at once odious and feeble; of freeing administration from the constitutional and salutary controul of parliament, and inventing for it a *new controul*, unknown to the constitution, an *interior cabinet;* which brings the whole body of government into confusion and contempt.

After having stated, as shortly as I am able, the effects of this system on our foreign affairs, on the policy of our government with regard to our dependencies, and on the interiour œconomy of the commonwealth; there remains only, in this part of my design, to say something of the grand principle which first recommended this system at court. The pretence was, to prevent the king from being enslaved by a faction, and made a prisoner in his closet. This scheme might have been expected to answer, at least its own end, and to indemnify the king, in his personal capacity, for all the confusion into which it has thrown his government. But has it in reality answered this purpose? I am sure, if it had, every affectionate subject would have one motive for enduring with patience all the evils which attend it.

In order to come at the truth in this matter, it may not be amiss to consider it somewhat in detail. I speak here of the king, and not of the crown; the interests of which we have already touched. Independent of that greatness which a king possesses merely by being a representative of the national dignity, the things in which he may have an individual interest seem to be these;—wealth accumulated; wealth spent in magnificence, pleasure, or beneficence; personal respect and attention; and above all, private ease and repose of mind. These compose the inventory of prosperous circumstances, whether they regard a prince or a subject; their enjoyments differing only in the scale upon which they are formed.

Suppose then we were to ask, whether the king has been richer than his predecessors in accumulated wealth, since the establishment of the plan of favouritism? I believe it will be found that the picture of royal indigence which our court has presented until this year, has been truly humiliating. Nor has it been relieved from this unseemly dis-

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tress, but by means which have hazarded the affection of the people, and shaken their confidence in parliament. If the publick treasures had been exhausted in magnificence and splendour, this distress would have been accounted for, and in some measure justified. Nothing would be more unworthy of this nation, than with a mean and mechanical rule, to mete out the splendour of the crown. Indeed I have found very few persons disposed to so ungenerous a procedure. But the generality of people, it must be confessed, do feel a good deal mortified, when they compare the wants of the court with its expenses. They do not behold the cause of this distress in any part of the apparatus of royal magnificence. In all this, they see nothing but the operations of parsimony, attended with all the consequences of profusion. Nothing expended, nothing saved. Their wonder is increased by their knowledge, that besides the revenue settled on his majesty's civil list to the amount of 800,000*l.* a year, he has a farther aid, from a large pension list, near 90,000*l.* a year, in Ireland; from the produce of the dutchy of Lancaster (which we are told has been greatly improved); from the revenue of the dutchy of Cornwall; from the American quit-rents; from the four and a half *per cent.* duty in the Leeward Islands; this last worth to be sure considerably more than 40,000*l.* a year. The whole is certainly not much short of a million annually.

These are revenues within the knowledge and cognizance of our national councils. We have no direct right to examine into the receipts from his majesty's German dominions, and the bishoprick of Osnaburg. This is unquestionably true. But that which is not within the province of parliament, is yet within the sphere of every man's own reflection. If a foreign prince resided amongst us, the state of his revenues could not fail of becoming the subject of our speculation. Filled with an anxious concern for whatever regards the welfare of our sovereign, it is impossible, in considering the miserable circumstances into which he has been brought, that this obvious topick should be entirely passed over. There is an opinion universal, that these revenues produce something not inconsiderable, clear of all charges and estab-

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lishments. This produce the people do not believe to be hoarded, nor perceive to be spent. It is accounted for in the only manner it can, by supposing that it is drawn away, for the support of that court faction, which, whilst it distresses the nation, impoverishes the prince in every one of his resources. I once more caution the reader, that I do not urge this consideration concerning the foreign revenue, as if I supposed we had a direct right to examine into the expenditure of any part of it; but solely for the purpose of shewing how little this system of favouritism has been advantageous to the monarch himself; which, without magnificence, has sunk him into a state of unnatural poverty; at the same time that he possessed every means of affluence, from ample revenues, both in this country, and in other parts of his dominions.

Has this system provided better for the treatment becoming his high and sacred character, and secured the king from those disgusts attached to the necessity of employing men who are not personally agreeable? This is a topick upon which for many reasons I could wish to be silent; but the pretence of securing against such causes of uneasiness, is the corner-stone of the court party. It has however so happened, that if I were to fix upon any one point, in which this system has been more particularly and shamefully blamable, the effects which it has produced would justify me in choosing for that point its tendency to degrade the personal dignity of the sovereign, and to expose him to a thousand contradictions and mortifications. It is but too evident in what manner these projectors of royal greatness have fulfilled all their magnificent promises. Without recapitulating all the circumstances of the reign, every one of which is more or less a melancholy proof of the truth of what I have advanced, let us consider the language of the court but a few years ago, concerning most of the persons now in the external administration: let me ask, whether any enemy to the personal feelings of the sovereign, could possibly contrive a keener instrument of mortification, and degradation of all dignity, than almost every part and member of the present arrangement? nor, in the whole course



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of our history, has any compliance with the will of the people ever been known to extort from any prince a greater contradiction to all his own declared affections and dislikes than that which is now adopted, in direct opposition to every thing the people approve and desire.

An opinion prevails, that greatness has been more than once advised to submit to certain condescensions towards individuals, which have been denied to the entreaties of a nation. For the meanest and most dependent instrument of this system knows, that there are hours when its existence may depend upon his adherence to it; and he takes his advantage accordingly. Indeed it is a law of nature, that whoever is necessary to what we have made our object, is sure in some way, or in some time or other, to become our master. All this however is submitted to, in order to avoid that monstrous evil of governing in concurrence with the opinion of the people. For it seems to be laid down as a maxim, that a king has some sort of interest in giving uneasiness to his subjects: that all who are pleasing to them, are to be of course disagreeable to him: that as soon as the persons who are odious at court are known to be odious to the people, it is snatched at as a lucky occasion of showering down upon them all kinds of emoluments and honours. None are considered as well-wishers to the crown, but those who advise to some unpopular course of action; none capable of serving it, but those who are obliged to call at every instant upon all its power for the safety of their lives. None are supposed to be fit priests in the temple of government, but the persons who are compelled to fly into it for sanctuary. Such is the effect of this refined project; such is ever the result of all the contrivances which are used to free men from the servitude of their reason, and from the neeessity of ordering their affairs according to their evident interests. These contrivances oblige them to run into a real and ruinous servitude, in order to avoid a supposed restraint that might be attended with advantage.

If therefore this system has so ill answered its own grand pretence of saving the king from the necessity of employing persons disagreeable to him, has it given more peace and

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tranquillity to his majesty's private hours? No, most certainly. The father of his people cannot possibly enjoy repose, while his family is in such a state of distraction. Then what has the crown or the king profited by all this fine-wrought scheme? Is he more rich, or more splendid, or more powerful, or more at his ease, by so many labours and contrivances? have they not beggared his exchequer, tarnished the splendour of his court, sunk his dignity, galled his feelings, discomposed the whole order and happiness of his private life?

It will be very hard, I believe, to state in what respect the king has profited by that faction which presumptuously choose to call themselves *his friends*.

If particular men had grown into an attachment, by the distinguished honour of the society of their sovereign; and, by being the partakers of his amusements, came sometimes to prefer the gratification of his personal inclinations to the support of his high character, the thing would be very natural, and it would be excusable enough. But the pleasant part of the story is, that these *king's friends* have no more ground for usurping such a title, than a resident freeholder in Cumberland or in Cornwall. They are only known to their sovereign by kissing his hand, for the offices, pensions, and grants, into which they have deceived his benignity. May no storm ever come, which will put the firmness of their attachment to the proof; and which, in the midst of confusions, and terrours, and sufferings, may demonstrate the eternal difference between a true and severe friend to the monarchy, and a slippery sycophant of the court! *Quantum infido scurræ distabit amicus.*

So far I have considered the effect of the court system, chiefly as it operates upon the executive government, on the temper of the people, and on the happiness of the sovereign. It remains, that we should consider, with a little attention, its operation upon parliament.

Parliament was indeed the great object of all these politicks, the end at which they aimed, as well as the instrument by which they were to operate. But, before parliament could be made subservient to a system, by which it was to

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be degraded from the dignity of a national council, into a mere member of the court, it must be greatly changed from its original character.

In speaking of this body, I have my eye chiefly on the house of commons. I hope I shall be indulged in a few observations on the nature and character of that assembly; not with regard to its *legal form and power*, but to its *spirit*, and to the purposes it is meant to answer in the constitution.

The house of commons was supposed originally to be *no part of the standing government of this country*. It was considered as a *control*, issuing *immediately* from the people, and speedily to be resolved into the mass from whence it arose. In this respect it was in the higher part of government what juries are in the lower. The capacity of a magistrate being transitory, and that of a citizen permanent, the latter capacity it was hoped would of course preponderate in all discussions, not only between the people and the standing authority of the crown, but between the people and the fleeting authority of the house of commons itself. It was hoped that, being of a middle nature between subject and government, they would feel with a more tender and a nearer interest every thing that concerned the people, than the other remoter and more permanent parts of legislature.

Whatever alterations time and the necessary accommodation of business may have introduced, this character can never be sustained, unless the house of commons shall be made to bear some stamp of the actual disposition of the people at large. It would (among publick misfortunes) be an evil more natural and tolerable, that the house of commons should be infected with every epidemical phrenzy of the people, as this would indicate some consanguinity, some sympathy of nature with their constituents, than that they should in all cases be wholly untouched by the opinions and feelings of the people out of doors. By this want of sympathy they would cease to be a house of commons. For it is not the derivation of the power of that house from the people, which makes it in a distinct sense their representative. The king is the representative of the people; so are the lords; so are the judges.

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They all are trustees for the people, as well as the commons; because no power is given for the sole sake of the holder; and although government certainly is an institution of divine authority, yet it forms, and the persons who administer it, all originate from the people.

A popular origin cannot therefore be the characteristical distinction of a popular representative. This belongs equally to all parts of government, and in all forms. The virtue, spirit, and essence of a house of commons consists in its being the express image of the feelings of the nation. It was not instituted to be a controul *upon* the people, as of late it has been taught, by a doctrine of the most pernicious tendency. It was designed as a controul *for* the people. Other institutions have been formed for the purpose of checking popular excesses; and they are, I apprehend, fully adequate to their object. If not, they ought to be made so. The house of commons, as it was never intended for the support of peace and subordination, is miserably appointed for that service; having no stronger weapon than its mace, and no better officer than its serjeant at arms, which it can command of its own proper authority. A vigilant and jealous eye over executory and judicial magistracy; an anxious care of publick money, an openness, approaching towards facility, to publick complaint: these seem to be the true characteristicks of a house of commons. But an addressing house of commons, and a petitioning nation; a house of commons full of confidence, when the nation is plunged in despair; in the utmost harmony with ministers, whom the people regard with the utmost abhorrence; who vote thanks, when the publick opinion calls upon them for impeachments; who are eager to grant, when the general voice demands account; who, in all disputes between the people and administration, presume against the people; who punish their disorders, but refuse even to inquire into the povocations to them; this is an unnatural, a monstrous state of things in this constitution. Such an assembly may be a great, wise, awful senate; but it is not to any popular purpose a house of commons. This change from an immediate state of procuration and delegation to a course of acting as from original power, is the way

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in which all the popular magistracies in the world have been perverted from their purposes. It is indeed their greatest and sometimes their incurable corruption. For there is a material distinction between that corruption by which particular points are carried against reason, (this is a thing which cannot be prevented by human wisdom, and is of less consequence) and the corruption of the principle itself. For then the evil is not accidental, but settled. The distemper becomes the natural habit.

For my part, I shall be compelled to conclude the principle of parliament to be totally corrupted, and therefore its ends entirely defeated, when I see two symptoms; first, a rule of indiscriminate support to all ministers; because this destroys the very end of parliament as a controul, and is a general previous sanction to misgovernment; and secondly, the setting up any claims adverse to the right of free election; for this tends to subvert the legal authority by which the house of commons sits.

I know that, since the Revolution, along with many dangerous, many useful powers of government have been weakened. It is absolutely necessary to have frequent recourse to the legislature. Parliaments must therefore sit every year, and for great part of the year. The dreadful disorders of frequent elections have also necessitated a septennial instead of a triennial duration. These circumstances, I mean the constant habit of authority, and the unfrequency of elections, have tended very much to draw the house of commons towards the character of a standing senate. It is a disorder which has arisen from the cure of greater disorders; it has arisen from the extreme difficulty of reconciling liberty under a monarchical government, with external strength and with internal tranquillity.

It is very clear that we cannot free ourselves entirely from this great inconvenience; but I would not increase an evil, because I was not able to remove it; and because it was not in my power to keep the house of commons religiously true to its first principles, I would not argue for carrying it to a total oblivion of them. This has been the great scheme of power in our time. They who will not conform their conduct to

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the publick good, and cannot support it by the prerogative of the crown, have adopted a new plan. They have totally abandoned the shattered and old fashioned fortress of prerogative, and made a lodgement in the strong hold of parliament itself. If they have any evil design to which there is no ordinary legal power commensurate, they bring it into parliament. In parliament the whole is executed from the beginning to the end. In parliament the power of obtaining their object is absolute; and the safety in the proceeding perfect; no rules to confine, no after-reckonings to terrify. Parliament cannot with any great propriety punish others, for things in which they themselves have been accomplices. Thus the controul of parliament upon the executory power is lost; because parliament is made to partake in every considerable act of government. *Impeachment, that great guardian of the purity of the constitution, is in danger of being lost, even to the idea of it.*

By this plan several important ends are answered to the cabal. If the authority of parliament supports itself, the credit of every act of government which they contrive, is saved; but if the act be so very odious that the whole strength of parliament is insufficient to recommend it, then parliament is itself discredited; and this discredit increases more and more that indifference to the constitution, which it is the constant aim of its enemies, by their abuse of parliamentary powers, to render general among the people. Whenever parliament is persuaded to assume the offices of executive government, it will lose all the confidence, love, and veneration, which it has ever enjoyed whilst it was supposed the *corrective and controul* of the acting powers of the state. This would be the event, though its conduct in such a perversion of its functions should be tolerably just and moderate; but if it should be iniquitous, violent, full of passion, and full of faction, it would be considered as the most intolerable of all the modes of tyranny.

For a considerable time this separation of the representatives from their constituents went on with a silent progress; and had those, who conducted the plan for their total separation, been persons of temper and abilities any

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way equal to the magnitude of their design, the success would have been infallible: but by their precipitancy they have laid it open in all its nakedness; the nation is alarmed at it: and the event may not be pleasant to the contrivers of the scheme. In the last session, the corps called the *king's friends* made an hardy attempt all at once, *to alter the right of election itself;* to put it into the power of the house of commons to disable any person disagreeable to them from sitting in parliament, without any other rule than their own pleasure; to make incapacities, either general for descriptions of men, or particular for individuals; and to take into their body, persons who avowedly had never been chosen by the majority of legal electors, nor agreeably to any known rule of law.

The arguments upon which this claim was founded and combated, are not my business here. Never has a subject been more amply and more learnedly handled, nor upon one side in my opinion more satisfactorily; they who are not convinced by what is already written would not receive conviction *though one arose from the dead.*

I too have thought on this subject: but my purpose here, is only to consider it as a part of the favourite project of government; to observe on the motives which led to it; and to trace its political consequences.

A violent rage for the punishment of Mr. Wilkes was the pretence of the whole. This gentleman, by setting himself strongly in opposition to the court cabal, had become at once an object of their persecution, and of the popular favour. The hatred of the court party pursuing, and the countenance of the people protecting him, it very soon became not at all a question on the man, but a trial of strength between the two parties. The advantage of the victory in this particular contest was the present, but not the only, nor by any means the principal, object. Its operation upon the character of the house of commons was the great point in view. The point to be gained by the cabal was this; that a precedent should be established, tending to shew, *That the favour of the people was not so sure a road as the favour of the court even to popular*

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*honours and popular trusts.* A strenuous resistance to every appearance of lawless power; a spirit of independence carried to some degree of enthusiasm; an inquisitive character to discover, and a bold one to display, every corruption and every errour of government; these are the qualities which recommend a man to a seat in the house of commons, in open and merely popular elections. An indolent and submissive disposition; a disposition to think charitably of all the actions of men in power, and to live in a mutual intercourse of favours with them; an inclination rather to countenance a strong use of authority, than to bear any sort of licentiousness on the part of the people; these are unfavourable qualities in an open election for members of parliament.

The instinct which carries the people towards the choice of the former, is justified by reason; because a man of such a character, even in its exorbitances, does not directly contradict the purposes of a trust, the end of which is a controul on power. The latter character, even when it is not in its extreme, will execute this trust but very imperfectly; and, if deviating to the least excess, will certainly frustrate instead of forwarding the purposes of a controul on government. But when the house of commons was to be new modelled, this principle was not only to be changed but reversed. Whilst any errours committed in support of power were left to the law, with every advantage of favourable construction, of mitigation, and finally of pardon; all excesses on the side of liberty, or in pursuit of popular favour, or in defence of popular rights and privileges, were not only to be punished by the rigour of the known law, but by a *discretionary* proceeding which brought on *the loss of the popular object itself.* Popularity was to be rendered, if not directly penal, at least highly dangerous. The favour of the people might lead even to a disqualification of representing them. Their odium might become, strained through the medium of two or three constructions, the means of sitting as the trustee of all that was dear to them. This is punishing the offence in the offending part. Until this time, the opinion of the people, through the power of an assem-



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bly, still in some sort popular, led to the greatest honours and emoluments in the gift of the crown. Now the principle is reversed; and the favour of the court is the only sure way of obtaining and holding those honours which ought to be in the disposal of the people.

It signifies very little how this matter may be quibbled away. Example, the only argument of effect in civil life, demonstrates the truth of my proposition. Nothing can alter my opinion concerning the pernicious tendency of this example, until I see some man for his indiscretion in the support of power, for his violent and intemperate servility, rendered incapable of sitting in parliament. For as it now stands, the fault of overstraining popular qualities, and, irregularly if you please, asserting popular privileges, has led to disqualification; the opposite fault never has produced the slightest punishment. Resistance to power, has shut the door of the house of commons to one man; obsequiousness and servility, to none.

Not that I would encourage popular disorder, or any disorder. But I would leave such offences to the law, to be punished in measure and proportion. The laws of this country are for the most part constituted, and wisely so, for the general ends of government, rather than for the preservation of our particular liberties. Whatever therefore is done in support of liberty, by persons not in publick trust, or not acting merely in that trust, is liable to be more or less out of the ordinary course of the law; and the law itself is sufficient to animadvert upon it with great severity. Nothing indeed can hinder that severe letter from crushing us, except the temperaments it may receive from a trial by jury. But if the habit prevails of *going beyond the law*, and superseding this judicature, of carrying offences, real or supposed, into the legislative bodies, who shall establish themselves into *courts of criminal equity* (so the *star chamber* has been called by Lord Bacon), all the evils of the *star chamber* are revived. A large and liberal construction in ascertaining offences, and a discretionary power in punishing them, is the idea of *criminal equity;* which is in truth a monster in jurisprudence. It signifies nothing whether a

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court for this purpose be a committee of council or a house of commons, or a house of lords; the liberty of the subject will be equally subverted by it. The true end and purpose of that house of parliament which entertains such a jurisdiction will be destroyed by it.

I will not believe, what no other man living believes, that Mr. Wilkes was punished for the indecency of his publications, or the impiety of his ransacked closet. If he had fallen in a common slaughter of libellers and blasphemers, I could well believe that nothing more was meant than was pretended. But when I see that, for years together, full as impious, and perhaps more dangerous writings to religion and virtue and order, have not been punished, nor their authors discountenanced; that the most audacious libels on royal majesty have passed without notice; that the most treasonable invectives against the laws, liberties, and constitution of the country, have not met with the slightest animadversion; I must consider this as a shocking and shameless pretence. Never did an envenomed scurrility against every thing sacred and civil, publick and private, rage through the kingdom with such a furious and unbridled licence. All this while the peace of the nation must be shaken, to ruin one libeller, and to tear from the populace a single favourite.

Nor is it that vice merely skulks in an obscure and contemptible impunity. Does not the publick behold with indignation, persons not only generally scandalous in their lives, but the identical persons who, by their society, their instruction, their example, their encouragement, have drawn this man into the very faults which have furnished the cabal with a pretence for his persecution, loaded with every kind of favour, honour, and distinction, which a court can bestow? Add but the crime of servility (the *fœdum crimen servitutis*) to every other crime, and the whole mass is immediately transmuted into virtue, and becomes the just subject of reward and honour. When therefore I reflect upon this method pursued by the cabal in distributing rewards and punishments, I must conclude that Mr. Wilkes is the object of persecution, not on account of what

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he has done in common with others who are the objects of reward, but for that in which he differs from many of them: that he is pursued for the spirited dispositions which are blended with his vices; for his unconquerable firmness, for his resolute, indefatigable, strenuous resistance against oppression.

In this case, therefore, it was not the man that was to be punished, nor his faults that were to be discountenanced. Opposition to acts of power was to be marked by a kind of civil proscription. The popularity which should arise from such an opposition was to be shewn unable to protect it. The qualities by which court is made to the people, were to render every fault inexpiable, and every errour irretrievable. The qualities by which court is made to power, were to cover and to sanctify every thing. He that will have a sure and honourable seat in the house of commons, must take care how he adventures to cultivate popular qualities; otherwise he may remember the old maxim, *Breves et infaustos populi Romani amores.* If, therefore, a pursuit of popularity expose a man to greater dangers than a disposition to servility, the principle which is the life and soul of popular elections will perish out of the constitution.

It behoves the people of England to consider how the house of commons, under the operation of these examples, must of necessity be constituted. On the side of the court will be, all honours, offices, emoluments; every sort of personal gratification to avarice or vanity; and what is of more moment to most gentlemen, the means of growing, by innumerable petty services to individuals, into a spreading interest in their country. On the other hand, let us suppose a person unconnected with the court, and in opposition to its system. For his own person, no office, or emolument, or title; no promotion ecclesiastical or civil, or military, or naval, for children, or brothers, or kindred. In vain an expiring interest in a borough calls for offices, or small livings, for the children of mayors, and aldermen, and capital burgesses. His court rival has them all. He can do an infinite number of acts of generosity and kind-

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ness, and even of publick spirit. He can procure indemnity from quarters. He can procure advantages in trade. He can get pardons for offences. He can obtain a thousand favours, and avert a thousand evils. He may, while he betrays every valuable interest of the kingdom, be a benefactor, a patron, a father, a guardian angel, to his borough. The unfortunate independent member has nothing to offer, but harsh refusal, or pitiful excuse, or despondent representation of an hopeless interest. Except from his private fortune, in which he may be equalled, perhaps exceeded, by his court competitor, he has no way of showing any one good quality, or of making a single friend. In the house, he votes forever in a dispirited minority. If he speaks, the doors are locked. A body of loquacious place-men go out to tell the world that all he aims at is to get into office. If he has not the talent of elocution, which is the case of many as wise and knowing men as any in the house, he is liable to all these inconveniencies, without the eclat which attends upon any tolerably successful exertion of eloquence. Can we conceive a more discouraging post of duty than this? Strip it of the poor reward of popularity; suffer even the excesses committed in defence of the popular interest, to become a ground for the majority of that house to form a disqualification out of the line of the law, and at their pleasure, attended not only with the loss of the franchise, but with every kind of personal disgrace.—If this shall happen, the people of this kingdom may be assured that they cannot be firmly or faithfully served by any man. It is out of the nature of men and things that they should; and their presumption will be equal to their folly if they expect it. The power of the people, within the laws, must shew itself sufficient to protect every representative in the animated performance of his duty, or that duty cannot be performed. The house of commons can never be a controul on other parts of government, unless they are controuled themselves by their constituents; and unless these constituents possess some right in the choice of that house, which it is not in the power of that house to take away. If they suffer this power of arbitrary incapacitation to stand, they have utterly perverted

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every other power of the house of commons. The late proceeding, I will not say, *is* contrary to law; it *must* be so; for the power which is claimed cannot, by any possibility, be a legal power in any limited member of government.

The power which they claim, of declaring incapacities, would not be above the just claims of a final judicature, if they had not laid it down as a leading principle, that they had no rule in the exercise of this claim, but their own *discretion*. Not one of their abettors has ever undertaken to assign the principle of unfitness, the species or degree of delinquency, on which the house of commons will expel, nor the mode of proceeding upon it, nor the evidence upon which it is established. The direct consequence of which is, that the first franchise of an Englishman, and that on which all the rest vitally depend, is to be forfeited for some offence which no man knows, and which is to be proved by no known rule whatsoever of legal evidence. This is so anomalous to our whole constitution, that I will venture to say, the most trivial right which the subject claims, never was, nor can be, forfeited in such a manner.

The whole of their usurpation is established upon this method of arguing. We do not *make* laws. No; we do not contend for this power. We only *declare* law; and, as we are a tribunal both competent and supreme, what we declare to be law becomes law, although it should not have been so before. Thus the circumstance of having no *appeal* from their jurisdiction is made to imply that they have no *rule* in the exercise of it; the judgment does not derive its validity from its conformity to the law; but preposterously the law is made to attend on the judgment; and the rule of the judgment is no other than the *occasional will of the house*. An arbitrary discretion leads, legality follows; which is just the very nature and description of a legislative act.

This claim in their hands was no barren theory. It was pursued into its utmost consequences; and a dangerous principle has begot a correspondent practice. A systematick spirit has been shewn upon both sides. The electors of Middlesex chose a person whom the house of commons had

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voted incapable ; and the house of commons has taken in a member whom the electors of Middlesex had not chosen. By a construction on that legislative power which had been assumed, they declared that the true legal sense of the country was contained in the minority, on that occasion; and might, on a resistance to a vote of incapacity, be contained in any minority.

When any construction of law goes against the spirit of the privilege it was meant to support, it is a vicious construction. It is material to us to be represented really and *bona fide*, and not in forms, in types, and shadows, and fictions of law. The right of election was not established merely as a *matter of form*, to satisfy some method and rule of technical reasoning ; it was not a principle which might substitute a *Titius* or a *Mævius*, a *John Doe* or *Richard Roe*, in the place of a man specially chosen ; not a principle which was just as well satisfied with one man as with another. It is a right, the effect of which is to give to the people, that man, and *that man only*, whom by their voices, actually, not constructively given, they declare that they know, esteem, love, and trust. This right is a matter within their own power of judging and feeling ; not an *ens rationis* and creature of law : nor can those devices, by which any thing else is substituted in the place of such an actual choice, answer in the least degree the end of representation.

I know that the courts of law have made as strained constructions in other cases. Such is the construction in common recoveries. The method of construction which in that case gives to the persons in remainder, for their security and representative, the door-keeper, cryer, or sweeper of the court, or some other shadowy being without substance or effect, is a fiction of a very coarse texture. This was however suffered, by the acquiescence of the whole kingdom, for ages, because the evasion of the old statute of Westminster, which authorized perpetuities, had more sense and utility than the law which was evaded. But an attempt to turn the right of election into such a farce and mockery as a fictitious fine and recovery, will, I hope, have another fate ; because the laws which give it are infinitely dear to us, and the evasion is infinitely contemptible.

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The people indeed have been told, that this power of discretionary disqualification is vested in hands that they may trust, and who will be sure not to abuse it to their prejudice. Until I find something in this argument differing from that on which every mode of despotism has been defended, I shall not be inclined to pay it any great compliment. The people are satisfied to trust themselves with the exercise of their own privileges, and do not desire this kind intervention of the house of commons to free them from the burthen. They are certainly in the right. They ought not to trust the house of commons with a power over their franchises: because the constitution, which placed two other co-ordinate powers to controul it, reposed no such confidence in that body. It were a folly well deserving servitude for its punishment, to be full of confidence where the laws are full of distrust; and to give to a house of commons, arrogating to its sole resolution the most harsh and odious part of legislative authority, that degree of submission which is due only to the legislature itself.

When the house of commons, in an endeavour to obtain new advantages at the expense of the other orders of the state, for the benefit of the *commons at large*, have pursued strong measures; if it were not just, it was at least natural, that the constituents should connive at all their proceedings; because we were ourselves ultimately to profit. But when this submission is urged to us, in a contest between the representatives and ourselves, and where nothing can be put into their scale which is not taken from ours, they fancy us to be children when they tell us they are our representatives, our own flesh and blood, and that all the stripes they give us are for our good. The very desire of that body to have such a trust contrary to law reposed in them, shews that they are not worthy of it. They certainly will abuse it; because all men possessed of an uncontrouled discretionary power leading to the aggrandizement and profit of their own body have always abused it: and I see no particular sanctity in our times, that is at all likely, by a miraculous operation, to overrule the course of nature.

But we must purposely shut our eyes, if we consider this

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matter merely as a contest between the house of commons and the electors. The true contest is between the electors of the kingdom and the crown; the crown acting by an instrumental house of commons. It is precisely the same, whether the ministers of the crown can disqualify by a dependent house of commons, or by a dependent court of *star chamber*, or by a dependent court of king's bench. If once members of parliament can be practically convinced that they do not depend on the affection or opinion of the people for their political being, they will give themselves over, without even an appearance of reserve, to the influence of the court.

Indeed, a parliament unconnected with the people, is essential to a ministry unconnected with the people; and therefore those who saw through what mighty difficulties the interiour ministry waded, and the exterior were dragged, in this business, will conceive of what prodigious importance, the new corps of *king's men* held this principle of occasional and personal incapacitation, to the whole body of their design.

When the house of commons was thus made to consider itself as the master of its constituents, there wanted but one thing to secure that house against all possible future deviation towards popularity; an *unlimited* fund of money to be laid out according to the pleasure of the court.

To complete the scheme of bringing our court to a resemblance to the neighbouring monarchies, it was necessary, in effect, to destroy those appropriations of revenue, which seem to limit the property, as the other laws had done the powers, of the crown. An opportunity for this purpose was taken, upon an application to parliament for payment of the debts of the civil list; which in 1769 had amounted to £.513,000. Such application had been made upon former occasions; but to do it in the former manner would by no means answer the present purpose.

Whenever the crown had come to the commons to desire a supply for the discharging of debts due on the civil list; it was always asked and granted with one of the three following qualifications; sometimes with all of them. Either it was stated, that the revenue had been diverted from its pur-



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poses by parliament; or that those duties had fallen short of the sum for which they were given by parliament, and that the intention of the legislature had not been fulfilled; or that the money required to discharge the civil list debt, was to be raised chargeable on the civil list duties. In the reign of Queen Anne, the crown was found in debt. The lessening and granting away some part of her revenue by parliament was alleged as the cause of that debt, and pleaded as an equitable ground, such it certainly was, for discharging it. It does not appear that the duties which were then applied to the ordinary government produced clear above £.580,000 a year; because, when they were afterwards granted to George the First, £.120,000 was added, to complete the whole to £.700,000 a year. Indeed it was then asserted, and, I have no doubt, truly, that for many years the net produce did not amount to above £.550,000. The Queen's extraordinary charges were besides very considerable; equal, at least, to any we have known in our time. The application to parliament was not for an absolute grant of money; but to empower the Queen to raise it by borrowing upon the civil list funds.

The civil list debt was twice paid in the reign of George the First. The money was granted upon the same plan which had been followed in the reign of Queen Anne. The civil list revenues were then mortgaged for the sum to be raised, and stood charged with the ransom of their own deliverance.

George the second received an addition to his civil list. Duties were granted for the purpose of raising £.800,000 a year. It was not until he had reigned nineteen years, and after the last rebellion, that he called upon parliament for a discharge of the civil list debt. The extraordinary charges brought on by the rebellion, account fully for the necessities of the crown. However, the extraordinary charges of government were not thought a ground fit to be relied on.

A deficiency of the civil list duties for several years before, was stated as the principal, if not the sole, ground on which an application to parliament could be justified. About this time the produce of these duties had fallen pretty low;

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and even upon an average of the whole reign they never produced £.800,000 a year clear to the treasury.

That prince reigned fourteen years afterwards: not only no new demands were made; but with so much good order were his revenues and expenses regulated, that, although many parts of the establishment of the court were upon a larger and more liberal scale than they have been since, there was a considerable sum in hand, on his decease, amounting to about £.170,000 applicable to the service of the civil list of his present majesty. So that, if this reign commenced with a greater charge than usual, there was enough, and more than enough, abundantly to supply all the extraordinary expense. That the civil list should have been exceededin the two former reigns, especially in the reign of George the First was not at all surprising. His revenue was but £.700,000, annually; if it ever produced so much clear. The prodigious and dangerous disaffection to the very being of the establishment, and the cause of a pretender then powerfully abetted from abroad, produced many demands of an extraordinary nature both abroad and at home. Much management and great expenses were necessary. But the throne of no prince has stood upon more unshaken foundations than that of his present majesty.

To have exceeded the sum given for the civil list, and to have incurred a debt without special authority of parliament, was, *prima facie*, a criminal act: as such, ministers ought naturally rather to have withdrawn it from the inspection, than to have exposed it to the scrutiny, of parliament. Certainly they ought, of themselves, officially to have come armed with every sort of argument, which, by explaining, could excuse, a matter in itself of presumptive guilt. But the terrours of the house of commons are no longer for ministers.

On the other hand the peculiar character of the house of commons, as trustee of the publick purse, would have led them to call with a punctilious solicitude for every publick account, and to have examined into them with the most rigorous accuracy.

The capital use of an account is, that the reality of the

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charge, the reason of incurring it, and the justice and necessity of discharging it, should all appear antecedent to the payment. No man ever pays first, and calls for his account afterwards; because he would thereby let out of his hands the principal, and indeed only effectual, means of compelling a full and fair one. But, in national business, there is an additional reason for a previous production of every account. It is a check, perhaps the only one, upon a corrupt and prodigal use of publick money. An account after payment is to no rational purpose an account. However, the house of commons thought all these to be antiquated principles; they were of opinion, that the most parliamentary way of proceeding was, to pay first what the court thought proper to demand, and to take its chance for an examination into accounts at some time of greater leisure.

The nation had settled £.800,000 a year on the crown, as sufficient for the support of its dignity, upon the estimate of its own ministers. When ministers came to parliament, and said that this allowance had not been sufficient for the purpose, and that they had incurred a debt of £.500,000 would it not have been natural for parliament first to have asked, how, and by what means, their appropriated allowance came to be insufficient? Would it not have savoured of some attention to justice, to have seen in what periods of administration this debt had been originally incurred; that they might discover, and, if need were, animadvert on the persons who were found the most culpable? To put their hands upon such articles of expenditure as they thought improper or excessive, and to secure in future, against such misapplication or exceeding? Accounts for any other purposes are but a matter of curiosity, and no genuine parliamentary object. All the accounts which could answer any parliamentary end were refused, or postponed by previous questions. Every idea of prevention was rejected, as conveying an improper suspicion of the ministers of the crown.

When every leading account had been refused, many others were granted with sufficient facility.

But with great candour also, the house was informed, that hardly any of them could be ready until the next session;

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some of them perhaps not so soon. But, in order firmly to establish the precedent of *payment previous to account*, and to form it into a settled rule of the house, the god in the machine was brought down, nothing less than the wonder-working *law of parliament*. It was alleged, that it is the law of parliament, when any demand comes from the crown, that the house must go immediately into the committee of supply; in which committee it was allowed, that the production and examination of accounts would be quite proper and regular. It was therefore carried, that they should go into the committee without delay, and without accounts, in order to examine with great order and regularity things that could not possibly come before them. After this stroke of orderly and parliamentary wit and humour, they went into the committee; and very generously voted the payment.

There was a circumstance in that debate too remarkable to be overlooked. This debt of the civil list was all along argued upon the same footing as a debt of the state, contracted upon national authority. Its payment was urged as equally pressing upon the publick faith and honour: and when the whole year's account was stated, in what is called *the budget*, the ministry valued themselves on the payment of so much publick debt, just as if they had discharged £.500,000 of navy or exchequer bills. Though, in truth, their payment, from the sinking fund, of debt which was never contracted by parliamentary authority, was, to all intents and purposes, so much debt incurred. But such is the present notion of publick credit, and payment of debt. No wonder that it produces such effects.

Nor was the house at all more attentive to a provident security against future, than it had been to a vindictive retrospect to past, mismanagements. I should have thought indeed that a ministerial promise, during their own continuance in office, might have been given, though this would have been but a poor security for the publick. Mr. Pelham gave such an assurance, and he kept his word. But nothing was capable of extorting from our ministers any thing which had the least resemblance to a promise of con-

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fining the expenses of the civil list within the limits which had been settled by parliament. This reserve of theirs I look upon to be equivalent to the clearest declaration, that they were resolved upon a contrary course.

However, to put the matter beyond all doubt, in the speech from the throne, after thanking parliament for the relief so liberally granted, the ministers inform the two houses, that they will *endeavour* to confine the expenses of the civil government—within what limits, think you? those which the law had prescribed? Not in the least—"such limits as the *honour of the crown* can possibly admit."

Thus they established an *arbitrary* standard for that dignity which parliament had defined and limited to a *legal* standard. They gave themselves, under the lax and indeterminate idea of the *honour of the crown*, a full loose for all manner of dissipation, and all manner of corruption. This arbitrary standard they were not afraid to hold out to both houses; while and idle an unoperative act of parliament, estimating the dignity of the crown at £.800,000, and confining it to that sum, adds to the number of obsolete statutes which load the shelves of libraries without any sort of advantage to the people.

After this proceeding, I suppose that no man can be so weak as to think that the crown is limited to any settled allowance whatsoever. For if the ministry has £.800,000 a year by the law of the land; and if by the law of parliament all the debts which exceed it are to be paid previous to the production of any account; I presume that this is equivalent to an income with no other limits than the abilities of the subject and the moderation of the court; that is to say, it is such an income as is possessed by every absolute monarch in Europe. It amounts, as a person of great ability said in the debate, to an unlimited power of drawing upon the sinking fund. Its effect on the publick credit of this kingdom must be obvious; for in vain is the sinking fund the great buttress of all the rest, if it be in the power of the ministry to resort to it for the payment of any debts which they may choose to incur, under the name of the civil list, and through the medium of a committee, which

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thinks itself obliged by law to vote supplies without any other account than that of the mere existence of the debt.

Five hundred thousand pounds is a serious sum. But it is nothing to the prolifick principle upon which the sum was voted: a principle that may be well called, *the fruitful mother of an hundred more.* Neither is the damage to publick credit of very great consequence, when compared with that which results to publick morals and to the safety of the constitution, from the exhaustless mine of corruption opened by the precedent, and to be wrought by the principle, of the late payment of the debts of the civil list. The power of discretionary disqualification by one law of parliament, and the necessity of paying every debt of the civil list by another law of parliament, if suffered to pass unnoticed, must establish such a fund of rewards and terrours as will make parliament the best appendage and support of arbitrary power that ever was invented by the wit of man. This is felt. The quarrel is begun between the representatives and the people. The court faction have at length committed them.

In such a strait the wisest may well be perplexed, and the boldest staggered. The circumstances are in a great measure new. We have hardly any land-marks from the wisdom of our ancestors, to guide us. At best we can only follow the spirit of their proceeding in other cases. I know the diligence with which my observations on our publick disorders have been made; I am very sure of the integrity of the motives on which they are published: I cannot be equally confident in any plan for the absolute cure of those disorders, or for their certain future prevention. My aim is to bring this matter into more publick discussion. Let the sagacity of others work upon it. It is not uncommon for medical writers to describe histories of diseases very accurately, on whose cure they can say but very little.

The first ideas which generally suggest themselves, for the cure of parliamentary disorders, are, to shorten the duration of parliaments; and to disqualify all, or a great number of placemen, from a seat in the house of commons. Whatever efficacy there may be in those remedies, I am sure in the present state of things it is impossible to apply

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them. A restoration of the right of free election is a preliminary indispensible to every other reformation. What alterations ought afterwards to be made in the constitution, is a matter of deep and difficult research.

If I wrote merely to please the popular palate, it would indeed be as little troublesome to me as to another, to extol these remedies, so famous in speculation, but to which their greatest admirers have never attempted seriously to resort in practice. I confess then, that I have no sort of reliance upon either a triennial parliament, or a place-bill. With regard to the former, perhaps it might rather serve to counteract, than to promote the ends that are proposed by it. To say nothing of the horrible disorders among the people attending frequent elections, I should be fearful of committing, every three years, the independent gentlemen of the country into a contest with the treasury. It is easy to see which of the contending parties would be ruined first. Whoever has taken a careful view of publick proceedings, so as to endeavour to ground his speculations on his experience, must have observed how prodigiously greater the power of ministry is in the first and last session of a parliament, than it is in the intermediate period, when members sit a little firm on their seats. The persons of the greatest parliamentary experience, with whom I have conversed, did constantly, in canvassing the fate of questions, allow something to the court side, upon account of the elections depending or imminent. The evil complained of, if it exists in the present state of things, would hardly be removed by a triennial parliament: for, unless the influence of government in elections can entirely be taken away, the more frequently they return, the more they will harass private independence; the more generally men will be compelled to fly to the settled systematick interest of government, and to the resources of a boundless civil list. Certainly something may be done, and ought to be done, towards lessening that influence in elections; and this will be necessary upon a plan either of longer or shorter duration of parliament. But nothing can so perfectly remove the evil, as not to render such contentions, too frequently repeated, utterly ruinous, first to independence of fortune, and then to

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independence of spirit. As I am only giving an opinion on this point, and not at all debating it in an adverse line, I hope I may be excused in another observation. With great truth I may aver, that I never remember to have talked on this subject with any man much conversant with publick business, who considered short parliaments as a real improvement of the constitution. Gentlemen, warm in a popular cause, are ready enough to attribute all the declarations of such persons to corrupt motives. But the habit of affairs, if, on one hand, it tends to corrupt the mind, furnishes it, on the other, with the means of better information. The authority of such persons will always have some weight. It may stand upon a par with the speculations of those who are less practised in business; and who, with perhaps purer intentions, have not so effectual means of judging. It is, besides, an effect of vulgar and puerile malignity to imagine, that every statesman is of course corrupt; and that his opinion, upon every constitutional point, is solely formed upon some sinister interest.

The next favourite remedy is a place-bill. The same principle guides in both; I mean, the opinion which is entertained by many, of the infallibility of laws and regulations, in the cure of publick distempers. Without being as unreasonably doubtful as many are unwisely confident, I will only say, that this also is a matter very well worthy of serious and mature reflection. It is not easy to foresee, what the effect would be, of disconnecting with parliament, the greatest part of those who hold civil employments, and of such mighty and important bodies as the military and naval establishments. It were better, perhaps, that they should have a corrupt interest in the forms of the constitution, than that they should have none at all. This is a question altogether different from the disqualification of a particular description of revenue officers from seats in parliament; or, perhaps, of all the lower sorts of them from votes in elections. In the former case, only the few are affected; in the latter, only the inconsiderable. But a great official, a great professional, a great military and naval interest, all necessarily comprehending many people of the first weight, ability, wealth, and spirit, has been gradually formed in the king-



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dom. These new interests must be let into a share of representation, else possibly they may be inclined to destroy those institutions of which they are not permitted to partake. This is not a thing to be trifled with; nor is it every well-meaning man, that is fit to put his hands to it. Many other serious considerations occur. I do not open them here, because they are not directly to my purpose; proposing only to give the reader some taste of the difficulties that attend all capital changes in the constitution; just to hint the uncertainty, to say no worse, of being able to prevent the court, as long as it has the means of influence abundantly in its power, of applying that influence to parliament; and perhaps, if the publick method were precluded, of doing it in some worse and more dangerous method. Underhand and oblique ways would be studied. The science of evasion, already tolerably understood, would then be brought to the greatest perfection. It is no inconsiderable part of wisdom, to know how much of an evil ought to be tolerated; lest, by attempting a degree of purity impracticable in degenerate times and manners, instead of cutting off the subsisting ill practices, new corruptions might be produced for the concealment and security of the old. It were better, undoubtedly, that no influence at all could affect the mind of a member of parliament. But of all modes of influence, in my opinion, a place under the government is the least disgraceful to the man who holds it, and by far the most safe to the country. I would not shut out that sort of influence which is open and visible, which is connected with the dignity and the service of the state, when it is not in my power to prevent the influence of contracts, of subscriptions, of direct bribery, and those innumerable methods of clandestine corruption, which are abundantly in the hands of the court, and which will be applied as long as these means of corruption, and the disposition to be corrupted, have existence amongst us. Our constitution stands on a nice equipoise, with steep precipices and deep waters upon all sides of it. In removing it from a dangerous leaning towards one side, there may be a risk of oversetting it on the other. Every project of a material change in a government so com-

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plicated as ours, combined at the same time with external circumstances still more complicated, is a matter full of difficulties; in which a considerate man will not be too ready to decide; a prudent man too ready to undertake; or an honest man too ready to promise. They do not respect the publick nor themselves, who engage for more than they are sure that they ought to attempt, or that they are able to perform. These are my sentiments, weak perhaps, but honest and unbiassed; and submitted entirely to the opinion of grave men, well affected to the constitution of their country, and of experience in what may best promote or hurt it.

Indeed, in the situation in which we stand, with an immense revenue, an enormous debt, mighty establishments, government itself a great banker and a great merchant, I see no other way for the preservation of a decent attention to publick interest in the representatives, but *the interposition of the body of the people itself*, whenever it shall appear, by some flagrant and notorious act, by some capital innovation, that these representatives are going to over-leap the fences of the law, and to introduce an arbitrary power. This interposition is a most unpleasant remedy. But, if it be a legal remedy, it is intended on some occasion to be used; to be used then only, when it is evident that nothing else can hold the constitution to its true principles.

The distempers of monarchy were the great subjects of apprehension and redress, in the last century; in this, the distempers of parliament. It is not in parliament alone that the remedy for parliamentary disorders can be completed; hardly indeed can it begin there. Until a confidence in government is re-established, the people ought to be excited to a more strict and detailed attention to the conduct of their representatives. Standards, for judging more systematically upon their conduct, ought to be settled in the meetings of counties and corporations. Frequent and correct lists of the voters in all important questions ought to be procured.

By such means something may be done. By such means it may appear who those are, that, by an indiscriminate support of all administrations, have totally banished all integri-

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ty and confidence out of publick proceedings; have confounded the best men with the worst; and weakened and dissolved, instead of strengthening and compacting, the general frame of government. If any person is more concerned for government and order, than for the liberties of his country; even he is equally concerned to put an end to this course of indiscriminate support. It is this blind and undistinguishing support, that feeds the spring of those very disorders, by which he is frighted into the arms of the faction which contains in itself the source of all disorders, by enfeebling all the visible and regular authority of the state. The distemper is increased by his injudicious and preposterous endeavours, or pretences, for the cure of it.

An exterior administration, chosen for its impotency, or after it is chosen purposely rendered impotent, in order to be rendered subservient, will not be obeyed. The laws themselves will not be respected, when those who execute them are despised; and they will be despised, when their power is not immediate from the crown, or natural in the kingdom. Never were ministers better supported in parliament. Parliamentary support comes and goes with office, totally regardless of the man, or the merit. Is government strengthened? It grows weaker and weaker. The popular torrent gains upon it every hour. Let us learn from our experience. It is not support that is wanting to government, but reformation. When ministry rests upon publick opinion, it is not indeed built upon a rock of adamant; it has, however, some stability. But when it stands upon private humour, its structure is of stubble, and its foundation is on quicksand. I repeat it again—He that supports every administration, subverts all government. The reason is this: The whole business in which a court usually takes an interest goes on at present equally well, in whatever hands, whether high or low, wise or foolish, scandalous or reputable; there is nothing therefore to hold it firm to any one body of men, or to any one consistent scheme of politicks. Nothing interposes, to prevent the full operation of all the caprices and all the passions of a court upon the servants of the publick. The system of administration is open to continual shocks and

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changes, upon the principles of the meanest cabal, and the most contemptible intrigue. Nothing can be solid and permanent. All good men at length fly with horrour from such a service. Men of rank and ability, with the spirit which ought to animate such men in a free state, while they decline the jurisdiction of dark cabal on their actions and their fortunes, will, for both, cheerfully put themselves upon their country. They will trust an inquisitive and distinguishing parliament; because it does enquire, and does distinguish. If they act well, they know, that in such a parliament, they will be supported against any intrigue; if they act ill, they know that no intrigue can protect them. This situation, however awful, is honourable. But in one hour, and in the self-same assembly, without any assigned or assignable cause, to be precipitated from the highest authority to the most marked neglect, possibly into the greatest peril of life and reputation, is a situation full of danger, and destitute of honour. It will be shunned equally by every man of prudence, and every man of spirit.

Such are the consequences of the division of court from the administration; and of the division of publick men among themselves. By the former of these, lawful government is undone; by the latter, all opposition to lawless power is rendered impotent. Government may in a great measure be restored, if any considerable bodies of men have honesty and resolution enough never to accept administration, unless this garrison of *king's men*, which is stationed, as in a citadel, to controul and enslave it, be entirely broken and disbanded, and every work they have thrown up be levelled with the ground. The disposition of publick men to keep this corps together, and to act under it, or to co-operate with it, is a touch-stone by which every administration ought in future to be tried. There has not been one which has not sufficiently experienced the utter incompatibility of that faction with the publick peace, and with all the ends of good government: since, if they opposed it, they soon lost every power of serving the crown; if they submitted to it, they lost all the esteem of their country. Until ministers give to the publick a full

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proof of their entire alienation from that system, however plausible their pretences, we may be sure they are more intent on the emoluments than the duties of office. If they refuse to give this proof, we know of what stuff they are made. In this particular, it ought to be the electors' business to look to their representatives. The electors ought to esteem it no less culpable in their member to give a single vote in parliament to such an administration, than to take an office under it; to endure it, than to act in it. The notorious infidelity and versatility of members of parliament, in their opinions of men and things, ought in a particular manner to be considered by the electors in the enquiry which is recommended to them. This is one of the principal holdings of that destructive system, which has endeavoured to unhinge all the virtuous, honourable, and useful connexions in the kingdom.

This cabal has, with great success, propagated a doctrine which serves for a colour to those acts of treachery; and whilst it receives any degree of countenance, it will be utterly senseless to look for a vigorous opposition to the court party. The doctrine is this: That all political connexions are in their nature factious, and as such ought to be dissipated and destroyed; and that the rule for forming administrations is mere personal ability, rated by the judgment of this cabal upon it, and taken by draughts from every division and denomination of publick men. This decree was solemnly promulgated by the head of the court corps, the Earl of Bute himself, in a speech which he made, in the year 1766, against the then administration, the only administration which he has ever been known directly and publickly to oppose.

It is indeed in no way wonderful, that such persons should make such declarations. That connexion and faction are equivalent terms, is an opinion which has been carefully inculcated at all times by unconstitutional statesmen. The reason is evident. Whilst men are linked together, they easily and speedily communicate the alarm of any evil design. They are enabled to fathom it with common counsel, and to oppose it with united strength. Whereas, when they

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lie dispersed, without concert, order, or discipline, communication is uncertain, counsel difficult, and resistance impracticable. Where men are not acquainted with each other's principles nor experienced in each other's talents, nor at all practised in their mutual habitudes and dispositions by joint efforts in business; no personal confidence, no friendship, no common interest, subsisting among them; it is evidently impossible that they can act a publick part with uniformity, perseverance or efficacy. In a connexion, the most inconsiderable man, by adding to the weight of the whole, has his value, and his use; out of it, the greatest talents are wholly unserviceable to the publick. No man, who is not inflamed by vain-glory into enthusiasm, can flatter himself that his single, unsupported, desultory, unsystematick endeavours are of power to defeat the subtle designs and united cabals of ambitious citizens. When bad men combine, the good must associate; else they will fall, one by one, an unpitied sacrifice in a contemptible struggle.

It is not enough in a situation of trust in the commonwealth, that a man means well to his country; it is not enough that in his single person he never did an evil act, but always voted according to his conscience, and even harangued against every design which he apprehended to be prejudicial to the interests of his country. This innoxious and ineffectual character, that seems formed upon a plan of apology and disculpation, falls miserably short of the mark of publick duty. That duty demands and requires, that what is right should not only be made known, but made prevalent; that what is evil should not only be detected, but defeated. When the publick man omits to put himself in a situation of doing his duty with effect, it is an omission that frustrates the purposes of his trust almost as much as if he had formally betrayed it. It is surely no very rational account of a man's life, that he has always acted right; but has taken special care, to act in such a manner that his endeavours could not possibly be productive of any consequence.

I do not wonder that the behaviour of many parties should have made persons of tender and scrupulous virtue some-

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what out of humour with all sorts of connexion in politicks. I admit that people frequently acquire in such confederacies a narrow, bigotted, and proscriptive spirit; that they are apt to sink the idea of the general good in this circumscribed and partial interest. But, where duty renders a critical situation a necessary one, it is our business to keep free from the evils attendant upon it; and not to fly from the situation itself. If a fortress is seated in an unwholesome air, an officer of the garrison is obliged to be attentive to his health, but he must not desert his station. Every profession, not excepting the glorious one of a soldier, or the sacred one of a priest, is liable to its own particular vices; which, however, form no argument against those ways of life; nor are the vices themselves inevitable to every individual in those professions. Of such a nature are connexions in politicks; essentially necessary for the full performance of our publick duty, accidentally liable to degenerate into faction. Commonwealths are made of families, free commonwealths of parties also; and we may as well affirm, that our natural regards and ties of blood tend inevitably to make men bad citizens, as that the bonds of our party weaken those by which we are held to our country.

Some legislators went so far as to make neutrality in party a crime against the state. I do not know whether this might not have been rather to overstrain the principle. Certain it is, the best patriots in the greatest commonwealths have always commended and promoted such connexions. *Idem sentire de republica*, was with them a principal ground of friendship and attachment; nor do I know any other capable of forming firmer, dearer, more pleasing, more honourable, and more virtuous habitudes. The Romans carried this principle a great way. Even the holding of offices together, the disposition of which arose from chance not selection, gave rise to a relation which continued for life. It was called *necessitudo sortis;* and it was looked upon with a sacred reverence. Breaches of any of these kinds of civil relation were considered as acts of the most distinguished turpitude. The whole people was distributed into political societies, in which they acted in support of such interests in

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the state as they severally affected. For it was then thought no crime, to endeavour by every honest means to advance to superiority and power those of your own sentiments and opinions. This wise people was far from imagining that those connexions had no tie, and obliged to no duty; but that men might quit them without shame, upon every call of interest. They believed private honour to be the great foundation of publick trust; that friendship was no mean step towards patriotism; that he who, in the common intercourse of life, shewed he regarded somebody besides himself, when he came to act in a publick situation, might probably consult some other interest than his own. Never may we become *plus sages que les sages*, as the French comedian has happily expressed it, wiser than all the wise and good men who have lived before us. It was their wish, to see publick and private virtues, not dissonant and jarring, and mutually destructive, but harmoniously combined, growing out of one another in a noble and orderly gradation, reciprocally supporting and supported. In one of the most fortunate periods of our history this country was governed by a *connexion*; I mean the great connexion of Whigs in the reign of Queen Anne. They were complimented upon the principle of this connexion by a poet who was in high esteem with them. Addison, who knew their sentiments, could not praise them for what they considered as no proper subject of commendation. As a poet who knew his business, he could not applaud them for a thing which in general estimation was not highly reputable. Addressing himself to Britain,

> Thy favourites grow not up by fortune's sport,
> Or from the crimes or follies of a court.
> On the firm basis of desert they rise,
> From long-try'd faith, and friendship's holy ties.

The Whigs of those days believed that the only proper method of rising into power was through hard essays of practised friendship and experimented fidelity. At that time it was not imagined, that patriotism was a bloody idol, which required the sacrifice of children and parents, or dearest connexions in private life, and of all the virtues that rise



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from those relations. They were not of that ingenious paradoxical morality, to imagine that a spirit of moderation was properly shewn in patiently bearing the sufferings of your friends; or that disinterestedness was clearly manifested at the expense of other people's fortune. They believed that no men could act with effect, who did not act in concert; that no men could act in concert, who did not act with confidence; that no men could act with confidence, who were not bound together by common opinions, common affections, and common interests.

These wise men, for such I must call Lord Sunderland, Lord Godolphin, Lord Somers, and Lord Marlborough, were too well principled in these maxims upon which the whole fabrick of publick strength is built, to be blown off their ground by the breath of every childish talker. They were not afraid that they should be called an ambitious Junto; or that their resolution to stand or fall together should, by placemen, be interpreted into a scuffle for places.

Party is a body of men united, for promoting by their joint endeavours the national interest, upon some particular principle in which they are all agreed. For my part, I find it impossible to conceive, that any one believes in his own politicks, or thinks them to be of any weight, who refuses to adopt the means of having them reduced into practice. It is the business of the speculative philosopher to mark the proper ends of government. It is the business of the politician, who is the philosopher in action, to find out proper means towards those ends, and to employ them with effect. Therefore every honourable connexion will avow it is their first purpose, to pursue every just method to put the men who hold their opinions into such a condition as may enable them to carry their common plans into execution, with all the power and authority of the state. As this power is attached to certain situations, it is their duty to contend for these situations. Without a proscription of others, they are bound to give to their own party the preference in all things; and by no means, for private considerations, to accept any offers of power in which the whole body is not included; nor to suffer themselves to be led, or to be controuled, or to be overbalanced, in office or

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in council, by those who contradict the very fundamental principles on which their party is formed, and even those upon which every fair connexion must stand. Such a generous contention for power, on such manly and honourable maxims, will easily be distinguished from the mean and interested struggle for place and emolument. The very style of such persons will serve to discriminate them from those numberless impostors, who have deluded the ignorant with professions incompatible with human practice, and have afterwards incensed them by practices below the level of vulgar rectitude.

It is an advantage to all narrow wisdom and narrow morals, that their maxims have a plausible air; and, on a cursory view, appear equal to first principles. They are light and portable. They are as current as copper coin; and about as valuable. They serve equally the first capacities and the lowest; and they are, at least, as useful to the worst men as the best. Of this stamp is the cant of *Not men, but measures;* a sort of charm, by which many people get loose from every honourable engagement. When I see a man acting this desultory and disconnected part, with as much detriment to his own fortune as prejudice to the cause of any party, I am not persuaded that he is right; but I am ready to believe he is in earnest. I respect virtue in all its situations; even when it is found in the unsuitable company of weakness. I lament to see qualities, rare and valuable, squandered away without any publick utility. But when a gentleman with great visible emoluments abandons the party in which he has long acted, and tells you, it is because he proceeds upon his own judgment; that he acts on the merits of the several measures as they arise; and that he is obliged to follow his own conscience, and not that of others; he gives reasons which it is impossible to controvert, and discovers a character which it is impossible to mistake. What shall we think of him who never differed from a certain set of men until the moment they lost their power, and who never agreed with them in a single instance afterwards? Would not such a coincidence of interest and opinion be rather fortunate? Would it not be an extraordinary cast upon the dice, that a man's

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connexions should degenerate into faction, precisely at the critical moment when they lose their power, or he accepts a place? When people desert their connexions, the desertion is a manifest *fact*, upon which a direct simple issue lies, triable by plain men. Whether a *measure* of government be right or wrong, is *no matter of fact*, but a mere affair of opinion, on which men may, as they do, dispute and wrangle without end. But whether the individual *thinks* the measure right or wrong, is a point at still a greater distance from the reach of all human decision. It is therefore very convenient to politicians, not to put the judgment of their conduct on overt-acts, cognizable in any ordinary court, but upon such matter as can be triable only in that secret tribunal, where they are sure of being heard with favour, or where at worst the sentence will be only private whipping.

I believe the reader would wish to find no substance in a doctrine which has a tendency to destroy all test of character as deduced from conduct. He will therefore excuse my adding something more towards the further clearing up a point, which the great convenience of obscurity to dishonesty has been able to cover with some degree of darkness and doubt.

In order to throw an odium on political connexion, these politicians suppose it a necessary incident to it, that you are blindly to follow the opinions of your party, when in direct opposition to your own clear ideas; a degree of servitude that no worthy man could bear the thought of submitting to; and such as, I believe, no connexions (except some court factions) ever could be so senselessly tyrannical as to impose. Men thinking freely, will, in particular instances, think differently. But still as the greater part of the measures which arise in the course of publick business are related to, or dependent on, some great *leading general principles in government*, a man must be peculiarly unfortunate in the choice of his political company if he does not agree with them at least nine times in ten. If he does not concur in these general principles upon which the party is founded, and which necssarily draw on a concurrence in their application, he ought from the beginning to

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have chosen some other, more conformable to his opinions. When the question is in its nature doubtful, or not very material, the modesty which becomes an individual, and (in spite of our court moralists) that partiality which becomes a well-chosen friendship, will frequently bring on an acquiescence in the general sentiment. Thus the disagreement will naturally be rare; it will be only enough to indulge freedom, without violating concord, or disturbing arrangement. And this is all that ever was required for a character of the greatest uniformity and steadiness in connexion. How men can proceed without any connexion at all, is to me utterly incomprehensible. Of what sort of materials must that man be made, how must he be tempered and put together, who can sit whole years in parliament, with five hundred and fifty of his fellow citizens, amidst the storm of such tempestuous passions, in the sharp conflict of so many wits, and tempers, and characters, in the agitation of such mighty questions, in the discussion of such vast and ponderous interests, without seeing any one sort of men, whose character, conduct, or disposition, would lead him to associate himself with them, to aid and be aided, in any one system of publick utility?

I remember an old scholastick aphorism, which says, "that the man who lives wholly detached from others, must be either an angel or a devil." When I see in any of these detached gentlemen of our times the angelick purity, power, and beneficence, I shall admit them to be angels. In the mean time we are born only to be men. We shall do enough if we form ourselves to be good ones. It is therefore our business carefully to cultivate in our minds, to rear to the most perfect vigour and maturity, every sort of generous and honest feeling that belongs to our nature. To bring the dispositions that are lovely in private life into the service and conduct of the commonwealth; so to be patriots, as not to forget we are gentlemen. To cultivate friendships, and to incur enmities. To have both strong, but both selected: in the one, to be placable; in the other immoveable. To model our principles to our duties and our situation. To be fully persuaded, that all virtue which is impracticable is spurious; and rather to run the risk of falling into faults in a

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course which leads us to act with effect and energy, than to loiter out our days without blame, and without use. Publick life is a situation of power and energy; he trespasses against his duty who sleeps upon his watch, as well as he that goes over to the enemy.

There is, however, a time for all things. It is not every conjuncture which calls with equal force upon the activity of honest men; but critical exigencies now and then arise; and I am mistaken, if this be not one of them. Men will see the necessity of honest combination; but they may see it when it is too late. They may embody, when it will be ruinous to themselves, and of no advantage to the country; when, for want of such a timely union as may enable them to oppose in favour of the laws, with the laws on their side, they may, at length, find themselves under the necessity of conspiring, instead of consulting. The law, for which they stand, may become a weapon in the hands of its bitterest enemies; and they will be cast, at length, into that miserable alternative, between slavery and civil confusion, which no good man can look upon without horrour; an alternative in which it is impossible he should take either part, with a conscience perfectly at repose. To keep that situation of guilt and remorse at the utmost distance, is therefore, our first obligation. Early activity may prevent late and fruitless violence. As yet we work in the light. The scheme of the enemies of publick tranquillity has disarranged, it has not destroyed us.

If the reader believes that there really exists such a faction as I have described; a faction ruling by the private inclinations of a court, against the general sense of the people; and that this faction, whilst it pursues a scheme for undermining all the foundations of our freedom, weakens (for the present at least) all the powers of executory government, rendering us abroad contemptible, and at home distracted; he will believe also, that nothing but a firm combination of publick men against this body, and that, too, supported by the hearty concurrence of the people at large can possibly get the better of it. The people will see the necessity of restoring publick men to an attention to the publick opinion, and of restoring the constitution to its original principles. Above all, they

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will endeavour to keep the house of commons from assuming a character which does not belong to it. They will endeavour to keep that house, for its existence, for its powers, and its privileges, as independent of every other, and as dependent upon themselves, as possible. This servitude is to a house of commons (like obedience to the divine law) "perfect freedom." For if they once quit this natural, rational, and liberal obedience, having deserted the only proper foundation of their power, they must seek a support in an abject and unnatural dependence somewhere else. When, through the medium of this just connexion with their constituents the genuine dignity of the house of commons is restored, it will begin to think of casting from it, with scorn, as badges of servility, all the false ornaments of illegal power, with which it has been, for some time, disgraced. It will begin to think of its old office of CONTROUL. It will not suffer, that last of evils, to predominate in the country; men without popular confidence, publick opinion, natural connexion, or mutual trust, invested with all the powers of government.

When they have learned this lesson themselves, they will be willing and able to teach the court, that it is the true interest of the prince to have but one administration; and that one composed of those who recommend themselves to their sovereign through the opinion of their country, and not by their obsequiousness to a favourite. Such men will serve their sovereign with affection and fidelity; because his choice of them, upon such principles, is a compliment to their virtue. They will be able to serve him effectually; because they will add the weight of the country to the force of the executory power. They will be able to serve their king with dignity; because they will never abuse his name to the gratification of their private spleen or avarice. This, with allowances for human frailty, may probably be the general character of a ministry, which thinks itself accountable to the house of commons; when the house of commons thinks itself accountable to its constituents. If other ideas should prevail, things must remain in their present confusion; until they are hurried into all the rage of civil violence; or until they sink into the dead repose of despotism.

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# Mr. BURKE'S SPEECH

## ON AMERICAN TAXATION.

1774.

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## PREFACE.

The following speech has been much the subject of conversation; and the desire of having it printed was last summer very general. The means of gratifying the publick curiosity were obligingly furnished from the notes of some gentlemen, members of the last parliament.

This piece has been for some months ready for the press. But a delicacy, possibly over scrupulous, has delayed the publication to this time. The friends of administration have been used to attribute a great deal of the opposition to their measures in America to the writings published in England. The editor of this speech kept it back, until all the measures of government have had their full operation, and can be no longer affected, if ever they could have been affected, by any publication.

Most readers will recollect the uncommon pains taken at the beginning of the last session of the last parliament, and indeed during the whole course of it, to asperse the characters, and decry the measures, of those who were supposed to be friends to America; in order to weaken the effect of their opposition to the acts of rigour then preparing against the colonies. The speech contains a full refutation of the charges against that party with which Mr. Burke has all along acted. In doing this, he has taken a review of the effects of all the schemes which have been successively adopted in the government of the plantations. The subject is interesting; the matters of information various, and important; and the publication at this time, the editor hopes, will not be thought unseasonable.

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# SPEECH, &c.

During the last session of the last Parliament, on the 19th of April, 1774, Mr. Rose Fuller, member for Rye, made the following motion; that an act made in the seventh year of the reign of his present majesty, intituled "An act for granting certain duties in the British colonies and plantations in America; for allowing a drawback of the duties of customs upon the exportation from this kingdom of coffee and cocoa nuts, of the produce of the said colonies or plantations; for discontinuing the drawbacks payable on china earthen ware exported to America; and for more effectually preventing the clandestine running of goods in the said colonies and plantations;" might be read.

And the same being read accordingly; he moved, "That this house will, upon this day, sevennight, resolve itself into a committee of the whole house, to take into consideration the duty of 3*d. per* pound weight upon tea, payable in all his majesty's dominions in America, imposed by the said act; and also the appropriation of the said duty."

On this latter motion a warm and interesting debate arose, in which Mr. Burke spoke as follows:

Sir,

I agree with the honourable gentleman* who spoke last, that this subject is not new in this house. Very disagreeably to this house, very unfortunately to this nation, and to the peace and prosperity of this whole empire, no topick has been more familiar to us. For nine long years, session

* Charles Wolfran Cornwall, Esq. lately appointed one of the lords of the treasury.



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after session, we have been lashed round and round this miserable circle of occasional arguments and temporary expedients. I am sure our heads must turn, and our stomachs nauseate with them. We have had them in every shape; we have looked at them in every point of view. Invention is exhausted; reason is fatigued; experience has given judgment; but obstinacy is not yet conquered.

The honourable gentleman has made one endeavour more to diversify the form of this disgusting argument. He has thrown out a speech composed almost entirely of challenges. Challenges are serious things; and as he is a man of prudence as well as resolution, I dare say he has very well weighed those challenges before he delivered them. I had long the happiness to sit at the same side of the house, and to agree with the honourable gentleman on all the American questions. My sentiments, I am sure, are well known to him; and I thought I had been perfectly acquainted with his. Though I find myself mistaken, he will still permit me to use the privilege of an old friendship, he will permit me to apply myself to the house under the sanction of his authority; and, on the various grounds he has measured out, to submit to you the poor opinions which I have formed, upon a matter of importance enough to demand the fullest consideration I could bestow upon it.

He has stated to the house two grounds of deliberation; one narrow and simple, and merely confined to the question on your paper: the other more large and more complicated; comprehending the whole series of the parliamentary proceedings with regard to America, their causes, and their consequences. With regard to the latter ground, he states it as useless, and thinks it may be even dangerous, to enter into so extensive a field of inquiry. Yet, to my surprise, he had hardly laid down this restrictive proposition, to which his authority would have given so much weight, when directly, and with the same authority, he condemns it; and declares it absolutely necessary to enter into the most ample historical detail. His zeal has thrown him a little out of his usual accuracy. In this perplexity what shall we do, Sir, who are willing to submit to the law he gives us? He has repro-

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bated in one part of his speech the rule he had laid down for debate in the other; and, after narrowing the ground for all those who are to speak after him, he takes an excursion himself, as unbounded as the subject and the extent of his great abilities.

Sir, When I cannot obey all his laws, I will do the best I can. I will endeavour to obey such of them as have the sanction of his example; and to stick to that rule, which, though not consistent with the other, is the most rational. He was certainly in the right when he took the matter largely. I cannot prevail on myself to agree with him in his censure of his own conduct. It is not, he will give me leave to say, either useless or dangerous. He asserts, that retrospect is not wise; and the proper, the only proper, subject of inquiry, is "not how we got into this difficulty, but how we are to get out of it." In other words, we are, according to him, to consult our invention, and to reject our experience. The mode of deliberation he recommends is diametrically opposite to every rule of reason, and every principle of good sense established amongst mankind. For, that sense and that reason, I have always understood, absolutely to prescribe, whenever we are involved in difficulties from the measures we have pursued, that we should take a strict review of those measures, in order to correct our errours if they should be corrigible; or at least to avoid a dull uniformity in mischief, and the unpitied calamity of being repeatedly caught in the same snare.

Sir, I will freely follow the honourable gentleman in his historical discussion, without the least management for men or measures, further than as they shall seem to me to deserve it. But before I go into that large consideration, because I would omit nothing that can give the house satisfaction, I wish to tread the narrow ground to which alone the honourable gentleman, in one part of his speech, has so strictly confined us.

He desires to know, whether, if we were to repeal this tax, agreeably to the proposition of the honourable gentleman who made the motion, the Americans would not take post on this concession, in order to make a new attack on

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the next body of taxes; and whether they would not call for a repeal of the duty on wine as loudly as they do now for the repeal of the duty on tea? Sir, I can give no security on this subject. But I will do all that I can, and all that can be fairly demanded. To the *experience* which the honourable gentleman reprobates in one instant, and reverts to in the next; to that experience, without the least wavering or hesitation on my part, I steadily appeal; and would to God there was no other arbiter to decide on the vote with which the house is to conclude this day.

When parliament repealed the stamp act in the year 1766, I affirm, first, that the Americans did *not* in consequence of this measure call upon you to give up the former parliamentary revenue which subsisted in that country; or even any one of the articles which compose it. I affirm also, that when, departing from the maxims of that repeal, you revived the scheme of taxation, and thereby filled the minds of the colonists with new jealousy, and all sorts of apprehensions, then it was that they quarrelled with the old taxes, as well as the new; then it was, and not till then, that they questioned all the parts of your legislative power; and by the battery of such questions have shaken the solid structure of this empire to its deepest foundations.

Of those two propositions I shall, before I have done, give such convincing, such damning proof, that however the contrary may be whispered in circles, or bawled in newspapers, they never more will dare to raise their voices in this house. I speak with great confidence. I have reason for it. The ministers are with me. *They* at least are convinced that the repeal of the stamp act had not, and that no repeal can have, the consequences which the honourable gentleman who defends their measures is so much alarmed at. To their conduct, I refer him for a conclusive answer to this objection. I carry my proof irresistibly into the very body of both ministry and parliament; not on any general reasoning growing out of collateral matter, but on the conduct of the honourable gentleman's ministerial friends on the new revenue itself.

The act of 1767, which grants this tea duty, sets forth in

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its preamble, that it was expedient to raise a revenue in America, for the support of the civil government there, as well as for purposes still more extensive. To this support the act assigns six branches of duties. About two years after this act passed, the ministry, I mean the present ministry, thought it expedient to repeal five of the duties, and to leave (for reasons best known to themselves) only the sixth standing. Suppose any person, at the time of that repeal, had thus addressed the minister,* "Condemning, as you do, the repeal of the stamp act, why do you venture to repeal the duties upon glass, paper, and painter's colours? Let your pretence for the repeal be what it will, are you not thoroughly convinced, that your concessions will produce, not satisfaction, but insolence in the Americans; and that the giving up these taxes will necessitate the giving up of all the rest?" This objection was as palpable then as it is now; and it was as good for preserving the five duties as for retaining the sixth. Besides, the minister will recollect, that the repeal of the stamp act had but just preceded his repeal; and the ill policy of that measure (had it been so impolitick as it has been represented), and the mischiefs it produced, were quite recent. Upon the principles therefore of the honourable gentleman, upon the principles of the minister himself, the minister has nothing at all to answer. He stands condemned by himself, and by all his associates old and new, as a destroyer, in the first trust of finance, of the revenues: and in the first rank of honour, as a betrayer of the dignity of his country.

Most men, especially great men, do not always know their well-wishers. I come to rescue that noble lord out of the hands of those he calls his friends; and even out of his own. I will do him the justice he is denied at home. He has not been this wicked or imprudent man. He knew that a repeal had no tendency to produce the mischiefs which give so much alarm to his honourable friend. His work was not bad in its principle, but imperfect in its execution; and the motion on your paper presses him only to complete a proper

* Lord North, then chancellor of the exchequer.

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plan, which, by some unfortunate and unaccountable errour, he had left unfinished.

I hope, Sir, the honourable gentleman who spoke last, is thoroughly satisfied, and satisfied out of the proceedings of ministry on their own favourite act, that his fears from a repeal are groundless. If he is not, I leave him, and the noble lord who sits by him, to settle the matter, as well as they can, together; for if the repeal of American taxes destroys all our government in America—He is the man!—and he is the worst of all the repealers, because he is the last.

But I hear it rung continually in my ears, now and formerly,—"the preamble! what will become of the preamble, if you repeal this tax?"—I am sorry to be compelled so often to expose the calamities and disgraces of parliament. The preamble of this law, standing as it now stands, has the lie direct given to it by the provisionary part of the act; if that can be called provisionary which makes no provision. I should be afraid to express myself in this manner, especially in the face of such a formidable array of ability as is now drawn up before me, composed of the ancient household troops of that side of the house, and the new recruits from this, if the matter were not clear and indisputable. Nothing but truth could give me this firmness; but plain truth and clear evidence can be beat down by no ability. The clerk will be so good as to turn to the act, and to read this favourite preamble:

*Whereas it is* expedient *that a revenue should be raised in your majesty's dominions in America, for making a more* certain *and* adequate *provision for defraying the charge of the* administration of justice, and support of civil government, *in such provinces where it shall be found necessary; and towards* further defraying *the expenses of* defending, protecting, and securing the said dominions.

You have heard this pompous performance. Now where is the revenue which is to do all these mighty things? Five sixths repealed—abandoned—sunk—gone—lost for ever. Does the poor solitary tea duty support the purposes of this preamble? Is not the supply there stated as effectually abandoned as if the tea duty had perished in the general wreck?

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Here, Mr. Speaker, is a precious mockery—a preamble without an act—taxes granted in order to be repealed—and the reasons of the grant still carefully kept up! This is raising a revenue in America! This is preserving dignity in England! If you repeal this tax in compliance with the motion, I readily admit that you lose this fair preamble. Estimate your loss in it. The object of the act is gone already; and all you suffer is the purging of the statute-book of the opprobrium of an empty, absurd, and false recital.

It has been said again and again, that the five taxes were repealed on commercial principles. It is so said in the paper in my hand;* a paper which I constantly carry about; which I have often used, and shall often use again. What is got by this paltry pretence of commercial principles I know not; for, if your government in America is destroyed by the *repeal of taxes*, it is of no consequence upon what ideas the repeal is grounded. Repeal this tax too upon commercial principles if you please. These principles will serve as well now as they did formerly. But you know that, either your objection to a repeal from these supposed consequences has no validity, or that this pretence never could remove it. This commercial motive never was believed by any man, either in America, which this letter is meant to soothe, or in England, which it is meant to deceive. It was impossible it should. Because every man, in the least acquainted with the detail of commerce, must know, that several of the articles on which the tax was repealed, were fitter objects of duties than almost any other articles that could possibly be chosen; without comparison more so, than the tea that was left taxed; as infinitely less liable to be eluded by contraband. The tax upon red and white lead was of this nature. You have, in this kingdom, an advantage in lead, that amounts to a monopoly. When you find yourself in this situation of advantage, you sometimes venture to tax even your own export. You did so,

* Lord Hillsborough's circular letter to the governours of the colonies, concerning the repeal of some of the duties laid in the act of 1767.

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soon after the last war; when, upon this principle, you ventured to impose a duty on coals. In all the articles of American contraband trade, who ever heard of the smuggling of red lead, and white lead? You might, therefore, well enough, without danger of contraband, and without injury to commerce (if this were the whole consideration) have taxed these commodities. The same may be said of glass. Besides, some of the things taxed were so trivial, that the loss of the objects themselves and their utter annihilation out of American commerce, would have been comparatively as nothing. But is the article of tea such an object in the trade of England, as not to be felt, or felt but slightly, like white lead, and red lead, and painters' colours? Tea is an object of far other importance. Tea is perhaps the most important object, taking it with its necessary connexions, of any in the mighty circle of our commerce. If commercial principles had been the true motives to the repeal, or had they been at all attended to, tea would have been the last article we should have left taxed for a subject of controversy.

Sir, it is not a pleasant consideration; but nothing in the world can read so awful and so instructive a lesson, as the conduct of ministry in this business, upon the mischief of not having large and liberal ideas in the management of great affairs. Never have the servants of the state looked at the whole of your complicated interests in one connected view. They have taken things, by bits and scraps, some at one time and one pretence, and some at another, just as they pressed, without any sort of regard to their relations or dependencies. They never had any kind of system, right or wrong; but only invented occasionally some miserable tale for the day, in order meanly to sneak out of difficulties, into which they had proudly strutted. And they were put to all these shifts and devices, full of meanness and full of mischief, in order to pilfer piece-meal a repeal of an act, which they had not the generous courage, when they found and felt their errour, honourably and fairly to disclaim. By such management, by the irresistible operation of feeble councils, so paltry a sum as three-pence

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in the eyes of a financier, so insignificant an article as tea in the eyes of a philosopher, have shaken the pillars of a commercial empire that circled the whole globe.

Do you forget that, in the very last year, you stood on the precipice of general bankruptcy? Your danger was indeed great. You were distressed in the affairs of the East India company; and you well know what sort of things are involved in the comprehensive energy of that significant appellation. I am not called upon to enlarge to you on that danger, which you thought proper yourselves to aggravate, and to display to the world with all the parade of indiscreet declamation. The monopoly of the most lucrative trades, and the possession of imperial revenues, had brought you to the verge of beggary and ruin. Such was your representation—such, in some measure, was your case. The vent of ten millions of pounds of this commodity, now locked up by the operation of an injudicious tax, and rotting in the warehouses of the company, would have prevented all this distress, and all that series of desperate measures which you thought yourselves obliged to take in consequence of it. America would have furnished that rent, which no other part of the world can furnish but America; where tea is next to a necessary of life; and where the demand grows upon the supply. I hope our dear-bought East India committees have done us at least so much good, as to let us know, that without a more extensive sale of that article, our East India revenues and acquisitions can have no certain connexion with this country. It is through the American trade of tea that your East India conquests are to be prevented from crushing you with their burthen. They are ponderous indeed; and they must have that great country to lean upon, or they tumble upon your head. It is the same folly that has lost you at once the benefit of the west and the east. This folly has thrown open folding-doors to contraband; and will be the means of giving the profits of the trade of your colonies, to every nation but yourselves. Never did a people suffer so much for the empty words of a preamble. It must be given up. For on what principle does it stand? This famous revenue stands, at this hour, on all the debate, as a description of revenue



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not as yet known in all the comprehensive (but too comprehensive!) vocabulary of finance—*a preambulary tax*. It is indeed a tax of sophistry, a tax of pedantry, a tax of disputation, a tax of war and rebellion, a tax for any thing but benefit to the imposers, or satisfaction to the subject.

Well! but whatever it is, gentlemen will force the colonists to take the teas. You will force them? has seven years' struggle been yet able to force them? O but it seems "we are in the right.—The tax is trifling—in effect it is rather an exoneration than an imposition; three-fourths of the duty formerly payable on teas exported to America is taken off; the place of collection is only shifted; instead of the retention of a shilling from the drawback here, it is threepence custom paid in America." All this, Sir, is very true. But this is the very folly and mischief of the act. Incredible as it may seem, you know that you have deliberately thrown away a large duty which you held secure and quiet in your hands, for the vain hope of getting one three-fourths less, through every hazard, through certain litigation, and possibly through war.

The manner of proceeding in the duties on paper and glass, imposed by the same act, was exactly in the same spirit. There are heavy excises on those articles when used in England. On export, these excises are drawn back. But instead of withholding the drawback, which might have been done, with ease, without charge, without possibility of smuggling; and instead of applying the money (money already in your hands) according to your pleasure, you began your operations in finance by flinging away your revenue; you allowed the whole drawback on export, and then you charged the duty (which you had before discharged), payable in the colonies; where it was certain the collection would devour it to the bone; if any revenue were ever suffered to be collected at all. One spirit pervades and animates the whole mass.

Could any thing be a subject of more just alarm to America, than to see you go out of the plain high road of finance, and give up your most certain revenues and your clearest interest, merely for the sake of insulting your colonies? No

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man ever doubted that the commodity of tea could bear an imposition of three-pence. But no commodity will bear three-pence, or will bear a penny, when the general feelings of men are irritated, and two millions of people are resolved not to pay. The feelings of the colonies were formerly the feelings of Great Britain. Theirs were formerly the feelings of Mr. Hampden when called upon for the payment of twenty shillings. Would twenty shillings have ruined Mr. Hampden's fortune? No! but the payment of half twenty shillings, on the principle it was demanded, would have made him a slave. It is the weight of that preamble, of which you are so fond, and not the weight of the duty, that the Americans are unable and unwilling to bear.

It is then, Sir, upon the *principle* of this measure, and nothing else, that we are at issue. It is a principle of political expediency. Your act of 1767 asserts, that it is expedient to raise a revenue in America; your act of 1769, which takes away that revenue, contradicts the act of 1767; and by something much stronger than words, asserts, that it is not expedient. It is a reflexion upon your wisdom to persist in a solemn parliamentary declaration of the expediency of any object, for which, at the same time, you make no sort of provision. And pray, Sir, let not this circumstance escape you; it is very material; that the preamble of this act, which we wish to repeal, is not *declaratory of right*, as some gentlemen seem to argue it; it is only a recital of the *expediency* of a certain exercise of a right supposed already to have been asserted; an exercise you are now contending for by ways and means, which you confess, though they were obeyed, to be utterly insufficient for their purpose. You are therefore at this moment in the awkward situation of fighting for a phantom; a quiddity; a thing that wants, not only a substance, but even a name; for a thing, which is neither abstract right, nor profitable enjoyment.

They tell you, Sir, that your dignity is tied to it. I know not how it happens, but this dignity of yours is a terrible incumbrance to you; for it has of late been ever at war with your interest, your equity, and every idea of your policy. Shew the thing you contend for to be reason;

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shew it to be common sense; shew it to be the means of attaining some useful end; and then I am content to allow it what dignity you please. But what dignity is derived from the perseverance in absurdity is more than I ever could discern. The honourable gentleman has said well—indeed, in most of his *general* observations I agree with him—he says, that this subject does not stand as it did formerly. Oh, certainly not! every hour you continue on this ill chosen ground, your difficulties thicken on you; and therefore my conclusion is, remove from a bad position as quickly as you can. The disgrace, and the necessity of yielding, both of them, grow upon you every hour of your delay.

But will you repeal the act, says the honourable gentleman, at this instant when America is in open resistance to your authority, and that you have just revived your system of taxation? He thinks he has driven us into a corner. But thus pent up, I am content to meet him; because I enter the lists supported by my old authority, his new friends, the ministers themselves. The honourable gentleman remembers, that about five years ago as great disturbances as the present prevailed in America on account of the new taxes. The ministers represented these disturbances as treasonable; and this house thought proper, on that representation, to make a famous address for a revival, and for a new application, of a statute of Henry VIII. We besought the king, in that well-considered address, to enquire into treasons, and to bring the supposed traitors from America to Great Britain for trial. His majesty was pleased graciously to promise a compliance with our request. All the attempts from this side of the house to resist these violences, and to bring about a repeal, were treated with the utmost scorn. An apprehension of the very consequences now stated by the honourable gentleman, was then given as a reason for shutting the door against all hope of such an alteration. And so strong was the spirit for supporting the new taxes, that the session concluded with the following remarkable declaration. After stating the vigorous measures which had been pursued, the speech from the throne proceeds:

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*You have assured me of your* firm *support in the* prosecution *of them. Nothing, in my opinion, could be more likely to enable the well disposed among my subjects in that part of the world, effectually to discourage and defeat the designs of the factious and seditious, than the hearty concurrence of every branch of the legislature, in* maintaining the execution of the laws in every *part of my dominions.*

After this no man dreamt that a repeal under this ministry could possibly take place. The honourable gentleman knows as well as I, that the idea was utterly exploded by those who sway the house. This speech was made on the ninth day of May, 1769. Five days after this speech, that is, on the 13th of the same month, the publick circular letter, a part of which I am going to read to you, was written by Lord Hillsborough, secretary of state for the colonies. After reciting the substance of the king's speech, he goes on thus:

"*I can take upon me to assure you, notwithstanding insinuations to the contrary, from men with* factious and seditious views, *that his majesty's* present administration have at no time entertained a design to propose to parliament to lay any further taxes upon America, for the purpose of RAISING A REVENUE; *and that it is at present their intention to propose, the next session of parliament, to take off the duties upon glass, paper, and colours, upon consideration of such duties* having been laid contrary to the true principles of commerce.

"*These have* always *been, and* still are, *the sentiments of his* majesty's present servants; *and by which their conduct in* respect to America has been governed. *And* his majesty *relies upon your prudence and fidelity for such an explanation of* his *measures, as may tend to remove the prejudices which have been excited by the misrepresentations of those who are enemies to the peace and prosperity of Great Britain and her colonies; and to re-establish that mutual* confidence and affection, *upon which the glory and safety of the British empire depend.*"

Here, Sir, is a canonical book of ministerial scripture;

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the general epistle to the Americans. What does the gentleman say to it? Here a repeal is promised; promised without condition; and while your authority was actually resisted. I pass by the publick promise of a peer relative to the repeal of taxes by this house. I pass by the use of the king's name in a matter of supply, that sacred and reserved right of the Commons. I conceal the ridiculous figure of parliament, hurling its thunders at the gigantick rebellion of America; and then five days after, prostrate at the feet of those assemblies we affected to despise; begging them, by the intervention of our ministerial sureties, to receive our submission; and heartily promising amendment. These might have been serious matters formerly; but we are grown wiser than our fathers. Passing, therefore, from the constitutional consideration to the mere policy, does not this letter imply, that the idea of taxing America for the purpose of revenue is an abominable project; when the ministry suppose none but *factious* men, and with seditious views could charge them with it? does not this letter adopt and sanctify the American distinction of *taxing for revenue*? does it not formally reject all future taxation on that principle? does it not state the ministerial rejection of such principle of taxation, not as the occasional, but the constant opinion of the king's servants? does it not say (I care not how consistently, but does it not say,) that their conduct with regard to America has been *always* governed by this policy? It goes a great deal further. These excellent and trusty servants of the king, justly fearful lest they themselves should have lost all credit with the world, bring out the image of their gracious sovereign from the inmost and most sacred shrine, and they pawn him as a security for their promises.—"*His majesty* relies on your prudence and fidelity for such an explanation of *his* measures." These sentiments of the minister, and these measures of his majesty, can only relate to the principle and practice of taxing for a revenue; and accordingly Lord Botetourt, stating it as such, did, with great propriety, and in the exact spirit of his instructions, endeavour to remove the fears of the Virginian assembly, lest the sentiments,

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which it seems (unknown to the world) had *always* been those of the ministers, and by which *their* conduct in *respect to America had been governed*, should by some possible revolution, favourable to wicked American taxes, be hereafter counteracted. He addresses them in this manner:

*It may possibly be objected, that, as his Majesty's present administration are* not immortal, *their successors may be inclined to attempt to undo what the present ministers shall have attempted to perform; and to that objection I can give but this answer; that it is my firm opinion, that the plan I have stated to you will certainly take place, and that it will never be departed from; and so determined am I for ever to abide by it, that I will be content to be declared infamous, if I do not, to the last hour of my life, at all times, in all places, and upon all occasions, exert every power with which I either am, or ever shall be legally invested, in order to obtain and* maintain *for the continent of America that* satisfaction *which I have been authorised to promise this day, by the* confidential *servants of our gracious sovereign, who to my certain knowledge rates his honour so high*, that he would rather part with his crown, than preserve it by deceit.*

A glorious and true character! which (since we suffer his ministers with impunity to answer for his ideas of taxa-

* A material point is omitted by Mr. Burke in this speech, viz. *the manner in which the continent received this royal assurance.* The assembly of Virginia, in their address in answer to lord Botetourt's speech, express themselves thus: "We will not suffer our present hopes, arising from the pleasing prospect your lordship hath so kindly opened and displayed to us, to be dashed by the bitter reflection that any *future* administration will entertain a wish to depart from the *plan* which affords the surest and most permanent foundation of publick tranquillity and happiness: No, my lord, we are sure *our most gracious sovereign*, under whatever changes may happen in his confidential servants, will remain immutable in the ways of truth and justice, and that he is *incapable of deceiving his faithful subjects*; and we must esteem your lordship's information not only as warranted, but evensanctified *by the royal word.*"

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tion) we ought to make it our business to enable his majesty to preserve in all its lustre. Let him have character, since ours is no more! Let some part of government be kept in respect!

This epistle was not the letter of lord Hillsborough solely; though he held the official pen. It was the letter of the noble lord upon the floor,* and of all the king's then ministers, who (with I think the exception of two only) are his ministers at this hour. The very first news that a British parliament heard of what it was to do with the duties which it had given and granted to the king, was by the publication of the votes of American assemblies. It was in America that your resolutions were pre-declared. It was from thence that we knew to a certainty, how much exactly, and not a scruple more nor less, we were to repeal. We were unworthy to be let into the secret of our own conduct. The assemblies had *confidential* communications from his majesty's *confidential* servants. We were nothing but instruments. Do you, after this, wonder, that you have no weight and no respect in the colonies? After this, are you surprised, that parliament is every day and every where *losing* (I feel it with sorrow, I utter it with reluctance) that reverential affection, which so endearing a name of authority ought ever to carry with it; that you are obeyed solely from respect to the bayonet; and that this house, the ground and pillar of freedom, is itself held up only by the treacherous under-pinning and clumsy buttresses of arbitrary power?

If this dignity, which is to stand in the place of just policy and common sense, had been consulted, there was a time for preserving it, and for reconciling it with any concession. If in the session of 1768, that session of idle terrour and empty menaces, you had, as you were often pressed to do, repealed these taxes; then your strong operations would have come justified and enforced, in case your concessions had been returned by outrages. But, preposterously, you began with violence; and before terrours could have any effect, either good or bad, your ministers immediately begged

* Lord North.

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pardon, and promised that repeal to the obstinate Americans which they had refused in an easy, good-natured, complying British parliament. The assemblies, which had been publickly and avowedly dissolved for *their* contumacy, are called together to receive *your* submission. Your ministerial directors blustered like tragick tyrants here; and then went mumping with a sore leg in America, canting and whining, and complaining of faction, which represented them as friends to a revenue from the colonies. I hope nobody in this house will hereafter have the impudence to defend American taxes in the name of ministry. The moment they do, with this letter of attorney in my hand, I will tell them, in the authorised terms, they are wretches, "with factious and seditious views; enemies to the peace and prosperity of the mother country and the colonies," and subverters "of the mutual affection and confidence on which the glory and safety of the British empire depend."

After this letter, the question is no more on propriety or dignity. They are gone already. The faith of your sovereign is pledged for the political principle. The general declaration in the letter goes to the whole of it. You must therefore either abandon the scheme of taxing; or you must send the ministers tarred and feathered to America, who dared to hold out the royal faith for a renunciation for all taxes for revenue. Them you must punish, or this faith you must preserve. The preservation of this faith is of more consequence than the duties on *red lead*, or *white lead*, or on broken *glass*, or *atlas-ordinary*, or *demy-fine*, or *blue-royal*, or *bastard*, or *fool's-cap*, which you have given up; or the three-pence on tea which you retained. The letter went stamped with the publick authority of this kingdom. The instructions for the colony government go under no other sanction; and America cannot believe, and will not obey you, if you do not preserve this channel of communication sacred. You are now punishing the colonies for acting on distinctions, held out by that very ministry which is here shining in riches, in favour, and in power; and urging the punishment of the very offence to which they had themselves been the tempters.



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Sir, if reasons respecting simply your own commerce, which is your own convenience, were the sole grounds of the repeal of the five duties; why does lord Hillsborough, in disclaiming in the name of the king and ministry their ever having had an intent to tax for revenue, mention it as the means "of re-establishing the confidence and affection of the colonies?" Is it a way of soothing *others*, to assure them that you will take good care of *yourself*? The medium, the only medium, for regaining their affection and confidence, is, that you will take off something oppressive to their minds. Sir, the letter strongly enforces that idea: for though the repeal of the taxes is promised on commercial principles, yet the means of counteracting "the insinuations of men with factious and seditious views," is, by a disclaimer of the intention of taxing for revenue, as a constant invariable sentiment and rule of conduct in the government of America.

I remember that the noble lord on the floor, not in a former debate to be sure (it would be disorderly to refer to it, I suppose I read it somewhere), but the noble lord was pleased to say, that he did not conceive how it could enter into the head of man to impose such taxes as those of 1767; I mean those taxes which he voted for imposing, and voted for repealing; as being taxes, contrary to all the principles of commerce, laid on *British manufactures*.

I dare say the noble lord is perfectly well read, because the duty of his particular office requires he should be so, in all our revenue laws; and in the policy which is to be collected out of them. Now, Sir, when he had read this act of American revenue, and a little recovered from his astonishment, I suppose he made one step retrograde (it is but one) and looked at the act which stands just before in the statute book. The American revenue act is the forty-fifth chapter; the other to which I refer is the forty-fourth of the same session. These two acts are both to the same purpose; both revenue acts; both taxing out of the kingdom; and both taxing British manufactures exported. As the 45th is an act for raising a revenue in America, the 44th is an act for raising a revenue in the Isle of Man. The two acts perfectly agree in all respects, except one. In the act for

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taxing the Isle of Man, the noble lord will find (not, as in the American act, four or five articles) but almost the *whole body*, of British manufactures, taxed from two and a half to fifteen *per cent.* and some articles, such as that of spirits, a great deal higher. You did not think it uncommercial to tax the whole mass of your manufactures, and, let me add, your agriculture too; for, I now recollect, British corn is there also taxed up to ten *per cent.* and this too in the very head quarters, the very citadel of smuggling, the Isle of Man. Now will the noble lord condescend to tell me why he repealed the taxes on your manufactures sent out to America, and not the taxes on the manufactures exported to the Isle of Man? The principle was exactly the same, the objects charged infinitely more extensive, the duties, without comparison higher. Why? why, notwithstanding all his childish pretexts, because the taxes were quietly submitted to in the Isle of Man; and because they raised a flame in America. Your reasons were political, not commercial. The repeal was made, as Lord Hillsborough's letter well expresses it, to regain "the confidence and affection of the colonies, on which the glory and safety of the British empire depend." A wise and just motive surely, if ever there was such. But the mischief and dishonour is, that you have not done what you had given the colonies just cause to expect, when your ministers disclaimed the idea of taxes for a revenue. There is nothing simple, nothing manly, nothing ingenuous, open, decisive, or steady, in the proceeding, with regard either to the continuance or the repeal of the taxes. The whole has an air of littleness and fraud. The article of tea is slurred over in the circular letter, as it were by accident—nothing is said of a resolution either to keep that tax, or to give it up. There is no fair dealing in any part of the transaction.

If you mean to follow your true motive and your publick faith, give up your tax on tea for raising a revenue, the principle of which has, in effect, been disclaimed in your name; and which produces you no advantage; no, not a penny. Or, if you choose to go on with a poor pretence instead of a solid reason, and will still adhere to your cant of com-

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merce, you have ten thousand times more strong commercial reasons for giving up this duty on tea, than for abandoning the five others that you have already renounced.

The American consumption of teas is annually, I believe, worth £.300,000 at the least farthing. If you urge the American violence as a justification of your perseverance in enforcing this tax, you know that you can never answer this plain question—Why did you repeal the others given in the same act, whilst the very same violence subsisted?—But you did not find the violence cease upon that concession.—No! because the concession was far short of satisfying the principle which lord Hillsborough had abjured! or even the pretence on which the repeal of the other taxes was announced: and because, by enabling the East India company to open a shop for defeating the American resolution not to pay that specifick tax, you manifestly shewed a hankering after the principle of the act which you formerly had renounced. Whatever road you take leads to a compliance with this motion. It opens to you at the end of every visto. Your commerce, your policy, your promises, your reasons, your pretences, your consistency, your inconsistency,—all jointly oblige you to this repeal.

But still it sticks in our throats, if we go so far, the Americans will go farther.—We do not know that. We ought, from experience, rather to presume the contrary. Do we not know for certain, that the Americans are going on as fast as possible, whilst we refuse to gratify them? can they do more, or can they do worse, if we yield this point? I think this concession will rather fix a turnpike to prevent a further progress. It is impossible to answer for bodies of men. But I am sure the natural effect of fidelity, clemency, kindness in governours, is peace, goodwill, order, and esteem, on the part of the governed. I would certainly, at least, give these fair principles a fair trial; which, since the making of this act to this hour, they never have had.

Sir, the honourable gentleman having spoken what he thought necessary upon the narrow part of the subject, I have given him, I hope, a satisfactory answer. He next

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presses me by a variety of direct challenges and oblique reflections to say something on the historical part. I shall, therefore, Sir, open myself fully on that important and delicate subject; not for the sake of telling you a long story (which, I know, Mr. Speaker, you are not particularly fond of,) but for the sake of the weighty instruction that, I flatter myself, will ncessarily result from it. It shall not be longer, if I can help it, than so serious a matter requires.

Permit me then, Sir, to lead your attention very far back; back to the act of navigation; the corner stone of the policy of this country, with regard to its colonies. Sir, that policy was, from the beginning, purely commercial; and the commercial system was wholly restrictive. It was the system of a monopoly. No trade was let loose from that constraint, but merely to enable the colonists to dispose of what, in the course of your trade, you could not take; or to enable them to dispose of such articles as we forced upon them, and for which, without some degree of liberty, they could not pay. Hence all your specifick and detailed enumerations: hence the innumerable checks and counterchecks: hence that infinite variety of paper chains by which you bind together this complicated system of the colonies. This principle of commercial monopoly runs through no less than twenty-nine acts of parliament, from the year 1660 to the unfortunate period of 1764.

In all those acts the system of commerce is established, as that, from whence alone you proposed to make the colonies contribute (I mean directly and by the operation of your superintending legislative power) to the strength of the empire. I venture to say, that during that whole period, a parliamentary revenue from thence was never once in contemplation. Accordingly, in all the number of laws passed with regard to the plantations, the words which distinguish revenue laws, specifically as such, were, I think, premeditately avoided. I do not say, Sir, that a form of words alters the nature of the law, or abridges the power of the lawgiver. It certainly does not. However, titles and formal preambles are not always idle words; and the lawyers fre-

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quently argue from them. I state these facts to shew, not what was your right, but what has been your settled policy. Our revenue laws have usually a *title*, purporting their being *grants*; and the words *give and grant* usually precede the enacting parts. Although duties were imposed on America in acts of King Charles the Second, and in acts of King William, no one title of giving "an aid to his majesty," or any other of the usual titles to revenue acts, was to be found in any of them till 1764; nor were the words "give and grant" in any preamble until the 6th of George the Second. However the title of this act of George the Second, notwithstanding the words of donation, considers it merely as a regulation of trade, "an act for the better securing of the trade of his majesty's sugar colonies in America." This act was made on a compromise of all, and at the express desire of a part, of the colonies themselves. It was therefore in some measure with their consent; and having a title directly purporting only a *commercial regulation*, and being in truth nothing more, the words were passed by, at a time when no jealousy was entertained, and things were little scrutinized. Even Governour Bernard, in his second printed letter, dated in 1763, gives it as his opinion, that "it was an act of *prohibition*, not of revenue." This is certainly true, that no act avowedly for the purpose of revenue, and with the ordinary title and recital taken together, is found in the statute book until the year I have mentioned; that is, the year 1764. All before this period stood on commercial regulation and restraint. The scheme of a colony revenue by British authority appeared therefore to the Americans in the light of a great innovation; the words of Governour Bernard's ninth letter, written in Nov. 1765, state this idea very strongly; "it must," says he, "have been supposed, *such an innovation as a parliamentary taxation*, would cause a great *alarm*, and meet with much *opposition* in most parts of America; it was *quite new* to the people, and had no *visible bounds* set to it." After stating the weakness of government there, he says, "was this a time to introduce *so great a novelty* as a parliamentary inland taxation in America?" Whatever the right might have

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been, this mode of using it was absolutely new in policy and practice.

Sir, they who are friends to the schemes of American revenue say, that the commercial restraint is full as hard a law for America to live under. I think so too. I think it, if uncompensated, to be a condition of as rigorous servitude as men can be subject to. But America bore it from the fundamental act of navigation until 1764.—Why? because men do bear the inevitable constitution of their original nature with all its infirmities. The act of navigation attended the colonies from their infancy, grew with their growth, and strengthened with their strength. They were confirmed in obedience to it, even more by usage than by law. They scarcely had remembered a time when they were not subject to such restraint. Besides, they were indemnified for it by a pecuniary compensation. Their monopolist happened to be one of the richest men in the world. By his immense capital (primarily employed, not for their benefit, but his own) they were enabled to proceed with their fisheries, their agriculture, their ship-building (and their trade too within the limits), in such a manner as got far the start of the slow languid operations of unassisted nature. This capital was a hot-bed to them. Nothing in the history of mankind is like their progress. For my part, I never cast an eye on their flourishing commerce, and their cultivated and commodious life, but they seem to me rather ancient nations grown to perfection through a long series of fortunate events, and a train of successful industry, accumulating wealth in many centuries, than the colonies of yesterday; than a set of miserable out-casts, a few years ago, not so much sent as thrown out, on the bleak and barren shore of a desolate wilderness three thousand miles from all civilized intercourse.

All this was done by England, whilst England pursued trade, and forgot revenue. You not only acquired commerce, but you actually created the very objects of trade in America; and by that creation you raised the trade of this kingdom at least four-fold. America had the compensation of your capital, which made her bear her servitude.

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She had another compensation, which you are now going to take away from her. She had, except the commercial restraint, every characteristick mark of a free people in all her internal concerns. She had the image of the British constitution. She had the substance. She was taxed by her own representatives. She chose most of her own magistrates. She paid them all. She had in effect the sole disposal of her own internal government. This whole state of commercial servitude and civil liberty, taken together, is certainly not perfect freedom; but comparing it with the ordinary circumstances of human nature, it was a happy and a liberal condition.

I know, Sir, that great and not unsuccessful pains have been taken to inflame our minds by an outcry, in this house and out of it, that in America the act of navigation neither is, nor ever was, obeyed. But if you take the colonies through, I affirm, that its authority never was disputed; that it was no where disputed for any length of time; and on the whole, that it was well observed. Wherever the act pressed hard, many individuals indeed evaded it. This is nothing. These scattered individuals never denied the law, and never obeyed it. Just as it happens whenever the laws of trade, whenever the laws of revenue, press hard upon the people in England; in that case all your shores are full of contraband. Your right to give a monopoly to the East India company, your right to lay immense duties on French brandy, are not disputed in England. You do not make this charge on any man. But you know that there is not a creek from Pentland Frith to the Isle of Wight, in which they do not smuggle immense quantities of teas, East India goods, and brandies. I take it for granted, that the authority of Governour Bernard in this point is indisputable. Speaking of these laws, as they regarded that part of America now in so unhappy a condition, he says, "I believe they are no where better supported than in this province; I do not pretend that it is entirely free from a breach of these laws; but that such a breach, if discovered, is justly punished." What more can you say of the obedience to any laws in any country? An obedience to these laws formed the ac-

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knowledgment, instituted by yourselves, for your superiority; and was the payment you originally imposed for your protection.

Whether you were right or wrong in establishing the colonies on the principles of commercial monopoly rather than on that of revenue, is at this day a problem of mere speculation. You cannot have both by the same authority. To join together the restraints of an universal internal and external monopoly, with an universal internal and external taxation, is an unnatural union; perfect uncompensated slavery. You have long since decided for yourself and them; and you and they have prospered exceedingly under that decision.

This nation, Sir, never thought of departing from that choice until the period immediately on the close of the last war. Then a scheme of government new in many things seemed to have been adopted. I saw, or thought I saw, several symptoms of a great change, whilst I sat in your gallery, a good while before I had the honour of a seat in this house. At that period the necessity was established of keeping up no less than twenty new regiments, with twenty colonels capable of seats in this house. This scheme was adopted with very general applause from all sides, at the very time that, by your conquests in America, your danger from foreign attempts in that part of the world was much lessened, or indeed rather quite over. When this huge increase of military establishment was resolved on, a revenue was to be found to support so great a burthen. Country gentlemen, the great patrons of œconomy, and the great resisters of a standing armed force, would not have entered with much alacrity into the vote for so large and so expensive an army, if they had been very sure that they were to continue to pay for it. But hopes of another kind were held out to them; and in particular, I well remember, that Mr. Townshend, in a brilliant harangue on this subject, did dazzle them; and in particular, I well remember that Mr. Townshend, in a brilliant harangue on this subject, did dazzle them, by playing before their eyes the image of a revenue to be raised in America.



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Here began to dawn the first glimmerings of this new colony system. It appeared more distinctly afterwards, when it was devolved upon a person to whom, on other accounts, this country owes very great obligations. I do believe, that he had a very serious desire to benefit the publick. But with no small study of the detail, he did not seem to have his view, at least equally, carried to the total circuit of our affairs. He generally considered his objects in lights that were rather too detached. Whether the business of an American revenue was imposed upon him altogether; whether it was entirely the result of his own speculation; or, what is more probable, that his own ideas rather coincided with the instructions he had received; certain it is, that, with the best intentions in the world, he first brought this fatal scheme into form, and established it by act of parliament.

No man can believe, that at this time of day I mean to lean on the venerable memory of a great man, whose loss we deplore in common. Our little party-differences have been long ago composed; and I have acted more with him, and certainly with more pleasure with him, than ever I acted against him. Undoubtedly Mr. Grenville was a first-rate figure in this country. With a masculine understanding, and a stout and resolute heart, he had an application undissipated and unwearied. He took publick business, not as a duty which he was to fulfil, but as a pleasure he was to enjoy; and he seemed to have no delight out of this house, except in such things as some way related to the business that was to be done within it. If he was ambitious, I will say this for him, his ambition was of a noble and generous strain. It was to raise himself, not by the low pimping politicks of a court, but to win his way to power, through the laborious gradations of publick service; and to secure himself a well-earned rank in parliament, by a thorough knowledge of its constitution, and a perfect practice in all its business.

Sir, if such a man fell into errours, it must be from defects not intrinsical; they must be rather sought in the particular habits of his life; which, though they do not alter the ground-work of character, yet tinge it with their own hue. He was bred in a profession. He was bred to the

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law, which is, in my opinion, one of the first and noblest of human sciences; a science which does more to quicken and invigorate the understanding, than all the other kinds of learning put together; but it is not apt, except in persons very happily born, to open and to liberalise the mind exactly in the same proportion. Passing from that study he did not go very largely into the world; but plunged into business; I mean into the business of office; and the limited and fixed methods and forms established there. Much knowledge is to be had undoubtedly in that line; and there is no knowledge which is not valuable. But it may be truly said, that men too much conversant in office, are rarely minds of remarkable enlargement. Their habits of office are apt to give them a turn to think the substance of business not to be much more important than the forms in which it is conducted. These forms are adapted to ordinary occasions; and therefore persons who are nurtured in office, do admirably well, as long as things go on in their common order; but when the high roads are broken up, and the waters out, when a new and troubled scene is opened, and the file affords no precedent, then it is that a greater knowledge of mankind, and a far more extensive comprehension of things is requisite than ever office gave, or than office can ever give. Mr. Grenville thought better of the wisdom and power of human legislation than in truth it deserves. He conceived, and many conceived along with him, that the flourishing trade of this country was greatly owing to law and institution, and not quite so much to liberty; for but too many are apt to believe regulation to be commerce, and taxes to be revenue. Among regulations, that which stood first in reputation was his idol. I mean the act of navigation. He has often professed it to be so. The policy of that act is, I readily admit, in many respects well understood. But I do say, that if the act be suffered to run the full length of its principle, and is not changed and modified according to the change of times and the fluctuation of circumstances, it must do great mischief, and frequently even defeat its own purpose.

After the war, and in the last years of it, the trade of

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America had increased far beyond the speculations of the most sanguine imaginations. It swelled out on every side. It filled all its proper channels to the brim. It overflowed with a rich redundance, and breaking its banks on the right and on the left, it spread out upon some places, where it was indeed improper, upon others where it was only irregular. It is the nature of all greatness not to be exact; and great trade will always be attended with considerable abuses. The contraband will always keep pace in some measure with the fair trade. It should stand as a fundamental maxim, that no vulgar precaution ought to be employed in the cure of evils, which are closely connected with the cause of our prosperity. Perhaps this great person turned his eyes somewhat less than was just, towards the incredible increase of the fair trade; and looked with something of too exquisite a jealousy towards the contraband. He certainly felt a singular degree of anxiety on the subject; and even began to act from that passion earlier than is commonly imagined. For whilst he was first lord of the admiralty, though not strictly called upon in his official line, he presented a very strong memorial to the lords of the treasury (my Lord Bute was then at the head of the board); heavily complaining of the growth of the illicit commerce in America. Some mischief happened even at that time from this over-earnest zeal. Much greater happened afterwards when it operated with greater power in the highest department of the finances. The bonds of the act of navigation were straitened so much, that America was on the point of having no trade, either contraband or legitimate. They found, under the construction and execution then used, the act no longer trying but actually strangling them. All this coming with new enumerations of commodities; with regulations which in a manner put a stop to the mutual coasting intercourse of the colonies; with the appointment of courts of admiralty under various improper circumstances; with a sudden extinction of the paper currencies; with a compulsory provision for the quartering of soldiers; the people of America thought themselves proceeded against as delinquents, or at best as people under suspicion of delinquency; and in such a manner, as they imagined, their re-

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cent services in the war did not at all merit. Any of these innumerable regulations, perhaps, would not have alarmed alone; some might be thought reasonable; the multitude struck them with terrour.

But the grand manœuvre in that business of new regulating the colonies, was the 15th act of the fourth of George III; which, besides containing several of the matters to which I have just alluded, opened a new principle: and here properly began the second period of the policy of this country with regard to the colonies; by which the scheme of a regular plantation parliamentary revenue was adopted in theory, and settled in practice. A revenue not substituted in the place of, but superadded to, a monopoly; which monopoly was enforced at the same time with additional strictness, and the execution put into military hands.

This act, Sir, had for the first time the title of "granting duties in the colonies and plantations of America;" and for the first time it was asserted in the preamble, "that it was *just* and *necessary* that a revenue should be raised there." Then came the technical words of "giving and granting," and thus a complete American revenue act was made in all the forms, and with a full avowal of the right, equity, policy, and even necessity of taxing the colonies, without any formal consent of theirs. There are contained also in the preamble to that act these very remarkable words—the commons, &c. —"being desirous to make *some* provision in the *present* session of parliament *towards* raising the said revenue." By these words it appeared to the colonies, that this act was but a beginning of sorrows; that every session was to produce something of the same kind; that we were to go on from day to day, in charging them with such taxes as we pleased, for such a military force as we should think proper. Had this plan been pursued, it was evident that the provincial assemblies, in which the Americans felt all their portion of importance, and beheld their sole image of freedom, were *ipso facto* annihilated. This ill prospect before them seemed to be boundless in extent, and endless in duration. Sir, they were not mistaken. The ministry valued themselves when this act passed, and when they

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gave notice of the stamp act, that both of the duties came very short of their ideas of American taxation. Great was the applause of this measure here. In England we cried out for new taxes on America, whilst they cried out that they were nearly crushed with those which the war and their own grants had brought upon them.

Sir, it has been said in the debate, that when the first American revenue act (the act in 1764, imposing the port duties) passed, the Americans did not object to the principle. It is true they touched it but very tenderly. It was not a direct attack. They were, it is true, as yet novices; as yet unaccustomed to direct attacks upon any of the rights of parliament. The duties were port duties, like those they had been accustomed to bear; with this difference, that the title was not the same, the preamble not the same, and the spirit altogether unlike. But of what service is this observation to the cause of those that make it? It is a full refutation of the pretence for their present cruelty to America; for it shews, out of their own mouths, that our colonies were backward to enter into the present vexatious and ruinous controversy.

There is also another circulation abroad, (spread with a malignant intention, which I cannot attribute to those who say the same thing in this house) that Mr. Grenville gave the colony agents an option for their assemblies to tax themselves, which they had refused. I find that much stress is laid on this, as a fact. However, it happens neither to be true nor possible. I will observe first, that Mr. Grenville never thought fit to make this apology for himself in the innumerable debates that were had upon the subject. He might have proposed to the colony agents, that they should agree in some mode of taxation as the ground of an act of parliament. But he never could have proposed that they should tax themselves on requisition, which is the assertion of the day. Indeed, Mr. Grenville well knew, that the colony agents could have no general powers to consent to it; and they had no time to consult their assemblies for particular powers, before he passed his first revenue act. If you compare dates, you will find it impossible. Burthened as

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the agents knew the colonies were at that time, they could not give the least hope of such grants. His own favourite governour was of opinion that the Americans were not then taxable objects:

"*Nor was the time less favourable to the* equity *of such a taxation. I don't mean to dispute the reasonableness of America contributing to the charges of Great Britain* when she is able; *nor, I believe, would the Americans themselves have disputed it, at a* proper time and season. *But it should be considered, that the American governments themselves have, in the prosecution of the late war, contracted very large debts; which it will take some years to pay off, and in the mean time occasion very* burdensome taxes for that purpose *only. For instance, this government, which is as much before-hand as any, raises every year £.37,500 sterling for sinking their debt, and must continue it for four years longer at least before it will be clear.*"

These are the words of Governour Bernard's letter to a member of the old ministry, and which he has since printed. Mr. Grenville could not have made this proposition to the agents, for another reason. He was of opinion, which he has declared in this house an hundred times, that the colonies could not legally grant any revenue to the crown; and that infinite mischiefs would be the consequence of such a power. When Mr. Grenville had passed the first revenue act, and in the same session had made this house come to a resolution for laying a stamp-duty on America, between that time and the passing the stamp-act into a law, he told a considerable and most respectable merchant, a member of this house, whom I am truly sorry I do not now see in his place, when he represented against this proceeding, that if the stamp-duty was disliked, he was willing to exchange it for any other equally productive; but that, if he objected to the Americans being taxed by parliament, he might save himself the trouble of the discussion, as he was determined on the measure. This is the fact, and, if you please, I will mention a very unquestionable authority for it.

Thus, Sir, I have disposed of this falsehood. But falsehood has a perennial spring. It is said, that no conjecture

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could be made of the dislike of the colonies to the principle. This is as untrue as the other. After the resolution of the house, and before the passing of the stamp-act, the colonies of Massachuset's Bay and New York did send remonstrances, objecting to this mode of parliamentary taxation. What was the consequence? They were suppressed; they were put under the table; notwithstanding an order of council to the contrary, by the ministry which composed the very council that had made the order; and thus the house proceeded to its business of taxing without the least regular knowledge of the objections which were made to it. But to give that house its due, it was not over desirous to receive information, or to hear remonstrance. On the 15th of February 1765, whilst the stamp-act was under deliberation, they refused with scorn even so much as to receive four petitions presented from so respectable colonies as Connecticut, Rhode Island, Virginia and Carolina; besides one from the traders of Jamaica. As to the colonies, they had no alternative left to them, but to disobey; or to pay the taxes imposed by that parliament which was not suffered, or did not suffer itself, even to hear them remonstrate upon the subject.

This was the state of the colonies before his majesty thought fit to change his ministers. It stands upon no authority of mine. It is proved by uncontrovertible records. The honourable gentleman has desired some of us to lay our hands upon our hearts, and answer to his queries upon the historical part of this consideration; and by his manner (as well as my eyes could discern it) he seemed to address himself to me.

Sir, I will answer him as clearly as I am able, and with great openness; I have nothing to conceal. In the year sixty-five, being in a very private station, far enough from any line of business, and not having the honour of a seat in this house, it was my fortune, unknowing and unknown to the then ministry, by the intervention of a common friend, to become connected with a very noble person, and at the head of the treasury department. It was indeed in a situation of little rank and no consequence, suitable to the mediocrity of

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my talents and pretensions. But a situation near enough to enable me to see, as well as others, what was going on; and I did see in that noble person such sound principles, such an enlargement of mind, such clear and sagacious sense, and such unshaken fortitude, as have bound me, as well as others much better than me, by an inviolable attachment to him from that time forward. Sir, Lord Rockingham very early in that summer received a strong representation from many weighty English merchants and manufacturers, from governours of provinces and commanders of men of war, against almost the whole of the American commercial regulations: and particularly with regard to the total ruin which was threatened to the Spanish trade. I believe, Sir, the noble lord soon saw his way in this business. But he did not rashly determine against acts which it might be supposed were the result of much deliberation. However, Sir, he scarcely began to open the ground, when the whole veteran body of office took the alarm. A violent outcry of all (except those who knew and felt the mischief) was raised against any alteration. On one hand, his attempt was a direct violation of treaties and publick law.—On the other, the act of navigation and all the corps of trade laws were drawn up in array against it.

The first step the noble lord took, was to have the opinion of his excellent, learned, and ever-lamented friend the late Mr. Yorke, then attorney-general, on the point of law. When he knew that formally and officially, which in substance he had known before, he immediately dispatched orders to redress the grievance. But I will say it for the then minister, he is of that constitution of mind, that I know he would have issued, on the same critical occasion, the very same orders, if the acts of trade had been, as they were not, directly against him; and would have cheerfully submitted to the equity of parliament for his indemnity.

On the conclusion of this business of the Spanish trade, the news of the troubles, on account of the stamp-act, arrived in England. It was not until the end of October that these accounts were received. No sooner had the sound of that mighty tempest reached us in England, than the whole of



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the then opposition, instead of feeling humbled by the unhappy issue of their measures, seemed to be infinitely elated, and cried out, that the ministry, from envy to the glory of their predecessors, were prepared to repeal the stamp-act. Near nine years after, the honourable gentleman takes quite opposite ground, and now challenges me to put my hand to my heart, and say, whether the ministry had resolved on the repeal till a considerable time after the meeting of parliament. Though I do not very well know what the honourable gentleman wishes to infer from the admission, or from the denial, of this fact, on which he so earnestly adjures me; I do put my hand on my heart, and assure him, that they did *not* come to a resolution directly to repeal. They weighed this matter as its difficulty and importance required. They considered maturely among themselves. They consulted with all who could give advice or information. It was not determined until a little before the meeting of parliament; but it was determined, and the main lines of their own plan marked out, before that meeting. Two questions arose (I hope I am not going into a narrative troublesome to the house)

[A cry of, go on, go on.]

The first of the two considerations was, whether the repeal should be total, or whether only partial; taking out every thing burthensome and productive, and reserving only an empty acknowledgment, such as a stamp on cards or dice. The other question was, on what principle the act should be repealed? On this head also two principles were started. One, that the legislative rights of this country, with regard to America, were not entire, but had certain restrictions and limitations. The other principle was, that taxes of this kind were contrary to the fundamental principles of commerce on which the colonies were founded; and contrary to every idea of political equity; by which equity we are bound, as much as possible, to extend the spirit and benefit of the British constitution to every part of the British dominions. The option, both of the measure, and of the principle of repeal, was made before the session; and I wonder how any one can read the king's speech at the opening of that session, without

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seeing in that speech both the repeal and the declaratory act very sufficiently crayoned out. Those who cannot see this can see nothing.

Surely the honourable gentleman will not think that a great deal less time than was then employed, ought to have been spent in deliberation; when he considers that the news of the troubles did not arrive till towards the end of October. The parliament sat to fill the vacancies on the 14th day of December, and on business the 14th of the following January.

Sir, a partial repeal, or, as the *bon ton* of the court then was, a *modification*, would have satisfied a timid, unsystematick, procrastinating ministry, as such a measure has since done such a ministry. A modification is the constant resource of weak undeciding minds. To repeal by a denial of our right to tax in the preamble (and this too did not want advisers), would have cut, in the heroick style, the Gordian knot with a sword. Either measure would have cost no more than a day's debate. But when the total repeal was adopted; and adopted on principles of policy, of equity, and of commerce; this plan made it necessary to enter into many and difficult measures. It became necessary to open a very large field of evidence commensurate to these extensive views. But then this labour did knight's service. It opened the eyes of several to the true state of the American affairs; it enlarged their ideas; it removed prejudices; and it conciliated the opinions and affections of men. The noble lord, who then took the lead in administration, my honourable friend* under me, and a right honourable gentleman† (if he will not reject his share, and it was a large one, of this business) exerted the most laudable industry in bringing before you the fullest, most impartial, and least-garbled body of evidence that ever was produced to this house. I think the inquiry lasted in the committee for six weeks; and at its conclusion this house, by an independent, noble, spirited, and unexpected majority; by a majority that will redeem all the acts ever done by majorities

* Mr. Dowdeswell. † General Conway.

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in parliament; in the teeth of all the old mercenary Swiss of state, in despite of all the speculators and augurs of political events, in defiance of the whole embattled legion of veteran pensioners and practised instruments of a court, gave a total repeal to the stamp-act, and (if it had been so permitted) a lasting peace to this whole empire.

I state, Sir, these particulars, because this act of spirit and fortitude has lately been, in the circulation of the season, and in some hazarded declamations in this house, attributed to timidity. If, Sir, the conduct of ministry, in proposing the repeal, had arisen from timidity with regard to themselves, it would have been greatly to be condemned. Interested timidity disgraces as much in the cabinet, as personal timidity does in the field. But timidity, with regard to the well-being of our country, is heroick virtue. The noble lord who then conducted affairs, and his worthy colleagues, whilst they trembled at the prospect of such distresses as you have since brought upon yourselves, were not afraid steadily to look in the face that glaring and dazzling influence at which the eyes of eagles have blenched. He looked in the face one of the ablest, and, let me say, not the most scrupulous oppositions, that perhaps ever was in this house, and withstood it, unaided by, even one of the usual supports of administration. He did this when he repealed the stamp-act. He looked in the face a person he had long respected and regarded, and whose aid was then particularly wanting; I mean lord Chatham. He did this when he passed the declaratory act.

It is now given out for the usual purposes, by the usual emissaries, that lord Rockingham did not consent to the repeal of this act until he was bullied into it by lord Chatham; and the reporters have gone so far as publickly to assert, in a hundred companies, that the honourable gentleman under the gallery,* who proposed the repeal in the American committee, had another set of resolutions in his pocket directly the reverse of those he moved. These artifices of a desperate cause are, at this time spread abroad, with incre-

* General Conway.

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dible care, in every part of the town, from the highest to the lowest companies; as if the industry of the circulation were to make amends for the absurdity of the report.

Sir, whether the noble lord is of a complexion to be bullied by lord Chatham, or by any man, I must submit to those who know him. I confess, when I look back to that time, I consider him as placed in one of the most trying situations in which, perhaps, any man ever stood. In the house of peers there were very few of the ministry, out of the noble lord's own particular connexion, (except lord Egmont, who acted, as far as I could discern, an honourable and manly part,) that did not look to some other future arrangement, which warped his politicks. There were in both houses new and menacing appearances, that might very naturally drive any other, than a most resolute minister, from his measure or from his station. The household troops openly revolted. The allies of ministry, (those, I mean, who supported some of their measures, but refused responsibility for any) endeavoured to undermine their credit, and to take ground that must be fatal to the success of the very cause which they would be thought to countenance. The question of the repeal was brought on by ministry in the committee of this house, in the very instant when it was known that more than one court negociation was carrying on with the heads of the opposition. Every thing, upon every side, was full of traps and mines. Earth below shook; heaven above menaced; all the elements of ministerial safety were dissolved. It was in the midst of this chaos of plots and counter-plots; it was in the midst of this complicated warfare against publick opposition and private treachery, that the firmness of that noble person was put to the proof. He never stirred from his ground; no, not an inch. He remained fixed and determined, in principle, in measure, and in conduct. He practised no managements. He secured no retreat. He sought no apology.

I will likewise do justice, I ought to do it, to the honourable gentleman who led us in this house.* Far from

* General Conway.

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the duplicity wickedly charged on him, he acted his part with alacrity and resolution. We all felt inspired by the example he gave us, down even to myself, the weakest in that phalanx. I declare for one, I knew well enough (it could not be concealed from any body) the true state of things; but, in my life, I never came with so much spirits into this house. It was a time for a *man* to act in. We had powerful enemies; but we had faithful and determined friends; and a glorious cause. We had a great battle to fight; but we had the means of fighting; not as now, when our arms are tied behind us. We did fight that day and conquer.

I remember, Sir, with a melancholy pleasure, the situation of the honourable gentleman* who made the motion for the repeal; in that crisis, when the whole trading interest of this empire, crammed into your lobbies, with a trembling and anxious expectation, waited, almost to a winter's return of light, their fate from your resolutions. When, at length you had determined in their favour, and your doors, thrown open, shewed them the figure of their deliverer in the well-earned triumph of his important victory, from the whole of that grave multitude there arose an involuntary burst of gratitude and transport. They jumped upon him like children on a long absent father. They clung about him as captives about their redeemer. All England, all America, joined to his applause. Nor did he seem insensible to the best of all earthly rewards, the love and admiration of his fellow citizens. *Hope elevated and joy brightened his crest.* I stood near him; and his face, to use the expression of the scripture of the first martyr, "his face was as if it had been the face of an angel." I do not know how others feel; but if I had stood in that situation, I never would have exchanged it for all that kings in their profusion could bestow. I did hope that that day's danger and honour would have been a bond to hold us all together for ever. But, alas! that, with other pleasing visions, is long since vanished.

Sir, this act of supreme magnanimity has been represented,

* General Conway.

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as if it had been a measure of an administration, that, having no scheme of their own, took a middle line, pilfered a bit from one side and a bit from the other. Sir, they took *no* middle lines. They differed fundamentally from the schemes of both parties; but they preserved the objects of both. They preserved the authority of Great Britain. They preserved the equity of Great Britain. They made the declaratory-act; they repealed the stamp-act. They did both *fully*; because the declaratory-act was *without qualification*; and the repeal of the stamp-act *total*. This they did in the situation I have described.

Now, Sir, what will the adversary say to both these acts? If the principle of the declaratory-act was not good, the principle we are contending for this day is monstrous. If the principle of the repeal was not good, why are we not at war for a real, substantial, effective revenue? If both were bad; why has this ministry incurred all the inconveniencies of both and of all schemes? Why have they enacted, repealed, enforced, yielded, and now attempt to enforce again?

Sir, I think I may as well now, as at any other time, speak to a certain matter of fact, not wholly unrelated to the question under your consideration. We, who would persuade you to revert to the ancient policy of this kingdom, labour under the effect of this short current phrase, which the court leaders have given out to all their corps, in order to take away the credit of those who would prevent you from that frantick war you are going to wage upon your colonies. Their cant is this; "All the disturbances in America have been created by the repeal of the stamp-act." I suppress for a moment my indignation at the falsehood, baseness, and absurdity of this most audacious assertion. Instead of remarking on the motives and character of those who have issued it for circulation, I will clearly lay before you the state of America, antecedently to that repeal; after the repeal; and since the renewal of the schemes of American taxation.

It is said, that the disturbances, if there were any, before the repeal, were slight; and without difficulty or inconve-

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nience might have been suppressed. For an answer to this assertion I will send you to the great author and patron of the stamp-act, who certainly meaning well to the authority of this country, and fully apprized of the state of that, made, before a repeal was so much as agitated in this house, the motion which is on your journals; and which, to save the clerk the trouble of turning to it, I will now read to you. It was for an amendment to the address of the 17th of December, 1765;

"*To express our just resentment and indignation at the* outrageous tumults and insurrections *which have been excited and carried on in North America; and at the resistance given, by* open *and* rebellious *force, to the execution of the laws in that part of his majesty's dominions. And to assure his majesty, that his faithful commons, animated with the warmest duty and attachment to his royal person and government, will firmly and effectually support his majesty in all such measures as shall be necessary for preserving and supporting the legal dependence of the colonies on the mother country*, &c. &c."

Here was certainly a disturbance preceding the repeal; such a disturbance as Mr. Grenville thought necessary to qualify by the name of an *insurrection*, and the epithet of a *rebellious* force: terms much stronger than any, by which, those who then supported his motion, have ever since thought proper to distinguish the subsequent disturbances in America. They were disturbances which seemed to him and his friends to justify as strong a promise of support, as hath been usual to give in the beginning of a war with the most powerful and declared enemies. When the accounts of the American governours came before the house, they appeared stronger even than the warmth of publick imagination had painted them; so much stronger, that the papers on your table bear me out in saying, that all the late disturbances, which have been at one time the minister's motives for the repeal of five out of six of the new court taxes, and are now his pretences for refusing to repeal that sixth, did not amount—why do I compare them? no, not to a tenth part of the tumults and violence which prevailed long before the repeal of that act.

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Ministry cannot refuse the authority of the commander in chief, general Gage, who, in his letter of the 4th of November, from New York, thus represents the state of things:

"*It is difficult to say, from the* highest to the lowest, *who has not been* accessary *to this* insurrection, *either by writing or* mutual agreements *to oppose the act, by what they are pleased to term all legal opposition to it. Nothing effectual has been proposed, either to prevent or quell the tumult.* The rest of the provinces are in the same situation *as to a positive refusal to take the stamps; and threatening those who shall take them,* to plunder and murder them; *and this affair stands* in all the provinces, *that unless the act, from its own nature, enforce itself, nothing but a* very *considerable military force can do it.*"

It is remarkable, Sir, that the persons who formerly trumpeted forth the most loudly, the violent resolutions of assemblies; the universal insurrections; the seizing and burning the stamped papers; the forcing the stamp officers to resign their commissions under the gallows; the rifling and pulling down the houses of magistrates; and the expulsion from their country of all who dared to write or speak a single word in defence of the powers of parliament; these very trumpeters are now the men that represent the whole as a mere trifle; and choose to date all the disturbances from the repeal of the stamp-act, which put an end to them. Hear your officers abroad, and let them refute this shameless falsehood, who, in all their correspondence, state the disturbances as owing to their true causes, the discontent of the people, from the taxes. You have this evidence in your own archives—and it will give you complete satisfaction; if you are not so far lost to all parliamentary ideas of information, as rather to credit the lie of the day, than the records of your own house.

Sir, this vermin of court reporters, when they are forced into day upon one point, are sure to burrow in another; but they shall have no refuge; I will make them bolt out of all their holes. Conscious that they must be baffled, when they attribute a precedent disturbance to a subsequent measure,



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they take other ground, almost as absurd, but very common in modern practice, and very wicked; which is, to attribute the ill effect of ill-judged conduct to the arguments which had been used to dissuade us from it. They say, that the opposition made in parliament to the stamp-act at the time of its passing, encouraged the Americans to their resistance. This has even formally appeared in print in a regular volume, from an advocate of that faction, a Dr. Tucker. This Dr. Tucker is already a dean, and his earnest labours in this vineyard will, I suppose, raise him to a bishoprick. But this assertion too, just like the rest, is false. In all the papers which have loaded your table; in all the vast crowd of verbal witnesses that appeared at your bar, witnesses which were indiscriminately produced from both sides of the house; not the least hint of such a cause of disturbance has ever appeared. As to the fact of a strenuous opposition to the stamp-act, I sat as a stranger in your gallery when the act was under consideration. Far from any thing inflammatory, I never heard a more languid debate in this house. No more than two or three gentlemen, as I remember, spoke against the act, and that with great reserve and remarkable temper. There was but one division in the whole progress of the bill; and the minority did not reach to more than 39 or 40. In the house of lords I do not recollect that there was any debate or division at all. I am sure there was no protest. In fact, the affair passed with so very, very little noise, that in town they scarcely knew the nature of what you were doing. The opposition to the bill in England never could have done this mischief, because there scarcely ever was less of opposition to a bill of consequence.

Sir, the agents and distributors of falsehoods have, with their usual industry, circulated another lie of the same nature with the former. It is this, that the disturbances arose from the account which had been received in America of the change in the ministry. No longer awed, it seems, with the spirit of the former rulers, they thought themselves a match for what our calumniators choose to qualify by the name of so feeble a ministry as succeeded. Feeble in one sense these men certainly may be called; for with all their efforts,

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and they have made many, they have not been able to resist the distempered vigour, and insane alacrity with which you are rushing to your ruin. But it does so happen, that the falsity of this circulation is (like the rest) demonstrated by indisputable dates and records.

So little was the change known in America, that the letters of your governours, giving an account of these disturbances long after they had arrived at their highest pitch, were all directed to the *old ministry*, and particularly to the *earl of Halifax*, the secretary of state corresponding with the colonies, without once in the smallest degree intimating the slightest suspicion of any ministerial revolution whatsoever. The ministry was not changed in England until the 10th day of July 1765. On the 14th of the preceding June, Governour Fauquier from Virginia writes thus; and writes thus to the earl of Halifax: "*Government is set at* defiance, *not having strength enough in her hands to enforce obedience to the laws of the community. The private distress, which every man feels, increases the* general dissatisfaction *at the duties laid by the* stamp-act, *which breaks out, and shews itself upon every trifling occasion.*" The general dissatisfaction had produced some time before, that is, on the 29th of May, several strong publick resolves against the stamp-act; and those resolves are assigned by Governour Bernard, as the cause of the *insurrections* in Massachuset's Bay, in his letter of the 15th of August, still addressed to the Earl of Halifax; and he continued to address such accounts to that minister quite to the 7th of September of the same year. Similar accounts, and of as late a date, were sent from other governours, and all directed to Lord Halifax. Not one of these letters indicates the slightest idea of a change, either known, or even apprehended.

Thus are blown away the insect race of courtly falsehoods! thus perish the miserable inventions of the wretched runners for a wretched cause, which they have fly-blown into every weak and rotten part of the country, in vain hopes that when their maggots had taken wing, their importunate buzzing might sound something like the publick voice!

Sir, I have troubled you sufficiently with the state of

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America before the repeal. Now I turn to the honourable gentleman who so stoutly challenges us, to tell, whether, after the repeal, the provinces were quiet? This is coming home to the point. Here I meet him directly; and answer most readily, *They were quiet.* And I, in my turn, challenge him to prove when, and where, and by whom, and in what numbers, and with what violence, the other laws of trade, as gentlemen assert, were violated in consequence of your concession? or that even your other revenue laws were attacked? but I quit the vantage ground on which I stand, and where I might leave the burthen of the proof upon him: I walk down upon the open plain, and undertake to shew, that they were not only quiet, but shewed many unequivocal marks of acknowldgment and gratitude. And to give him every advantage, I select the obnoxious colony of Massachuset's Bay, which at this time (but without hearing her) is so heavily a culprit before parliament—I will select their proceedings even under circumstances of no small irritation. For, a little imprudently, I must say, Governour Bernard mixed in the administration of the lenitive of the repeal no small acrimony arising from matters of a separate nature. Yet see, Sir, the effect of that lenitive, though mixed with these better ingredients; and how this rugged people can express themselves on a measure of concession.

"*If it is not in our power,*" (say they in their address to Governour Bernard) "*in so full a manner as will be expected, to shew our respectful gratitude to the mother country, or to make a dutiful and affectionate return to the indulgence of the king and parliament, it shall be no fault of ours; for this we intend, and hope we shall be able fully to effect.*"

Would to God that this temper had been cultivated, managed, and set in action! other effects than those which we have since felt would have resulted from it. On the requisition for compensation to those who had suffered from the violence of the populace, in the same address they say, "*The recommendation enjoined by Mr. Secretary Conway's letter, and in consequence thereof made to us, we will embrace the first convenient opportunity to consider and act*

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*upon.*" They did consider; they did act upon it. They obeyed the requisition. I know the mode has been chicaned upon; but it was substantially obeyed; and much better obeyed, than I fear the parliamentary requisition of this session will be, though enforced by all your rigour, and backed with all your power. In a word, the damages of popular fury were compensated by legislative gravity. Almost every other part of America in various ways demonstrated their gratitude. I am bold to say, that so sudden a calm recovered after so violent a storm is without parallel in history. To say that no other disturbance should happen from any other cause, is folly. But as far as appearances went, by the judicious sacrifice of one law, you procured an acquiescence in all that remained. After this experience, nobody shall persuade me, when a whole people are concerned, that acts of lenity are not means of conciliation.

I hope the honourable gentleman has received a fair and full answer to his question.

I have done with the third period of your policy; that of your repeal; and the return of your ancient system, and your ancient tranquillity and concord. Sir, this period was not as long as it was happy. Another scene was opened, and other actors appeared on the stage. The state, in the condition I have described it, was delivered into the hands of Lord Chatham—a great and celebrated name; a name that keeps the name of this country respectable in every other on the globe. It may be truly called,

Clarum et venerabile nomen
Gentibus, et multum nostræ quod proderat urbi.

Sir, the venerable age of this great man, his merited rank, his superiour eloquence, his splendid qualities, his eminent services, the vast space he fills in the eye of mankind; and, more than all the rest, his fall from power, which, like death, canonizes and sanctifies a great character, will not suffer me to censure any part of his conduct. I am afraid to flatter him; I am sure I am not disposed to blame him. Let those who have betrayed him by their

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adulation, insult him with their malevolence. But what I do not presume to censure, I may have leave to lament. For a wise man, he seemed to me at that time, to be governed too much by general maxims. I speak with the freedom of history, and I hope without offence. One or two of these maxims, flowing from an opinion not the most indulgent to our unhappy species, and surely a little too general, led him into measures that were greatly mischievous to himself; and for that reason, among others, perhaps fatal to his country; measures, the effects of which, I am afraid, are for ever incurable. He made an administration, so checkered and speckled; he put together a piece of joinery, so crossly indented and whimsically dove-tailed; a cabinet so variously inlaid; such a piece of diversified Mosaick; such a tesselated pavement without cement; here a bit of black stone, and there a bit of white; patriots and courtiers, king's friends and republicans; whigs and tories; treacherous friends and open enemies: that it was indeed a very curious show; but utterly unsafe to touch, and unsure to stand on. The colleagues whom he had assorted at the same boards, stared at each other, and were obliged to ask, "Sir, your name?—Sir, you have the advantage of me—Mr. Such-a-one—I beg a thousand pardons—" I venture to say, it did so happen, that persons had a single office divided between them, who had never spoke to each other in their lives; until they found themselves, they knew not how, pigging together, heads and points, in the same truckle-bed.*

Sir, in consequence of this arrangement, having put so much the larger part of his enemies and opposers into power, the confusion was such, that his own principles could not possibly have any effect or influence in the conduct of affairs. If ever he fell into a fit of the gout, or if any other cause withdrew him from publick cares, principles directly the contrary were sure to predominate. When he

* Supposed to allude to the Right Honourable Lord North, and George Cooke, Esq. who were made joint paymasters in the summer of 1766, on the removal of the Rockingham adminstration.

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had executed his plan, he had not an inch of ground to stand upon. When he had accomplished his scheme of administration, he was no longer a minister.

When his face was hid but for a moment, his whole system was on a wide sea, without chart or compass. The gentlemen, his particular friends, who, with the names of various departments of ministry, were admitted, to seem, as if they acted a part under him, with a modesty that becomes all men, and with a confidence in him, which was justified even in its extravagance by his superiour abilities, had never, in any instance, presumed upon any opinion of their own. Deprived of his guiding influence, they were whirled about, the sport of every gust, and easily driven into any port; and as those who joined with them in manning the vessel were the most directly opposite to his opinions, measures, and character, and far the most artful and most powerful of the set, they easily prevailed, so as to seize upon the vacant, unoccupied, and derelict minds of his friends; and instantly they turned the vessel wholly out of the course of his policy. As if it were to insult as well as to betray him, even long before the close of the first session of his administration, when every thing was publickly transacted, and with great parade, in his name, they made an act, declaring it highly just and expedient to raise a revenue in America. For even then, Sir, even before this splendid orb was entirely set, and while the western horizon was in a blaze with his descending glory, on the opposite quarter of the heavens arose another luminary, and, for his hour, became lord of the ascendant.

This light too is passed and set for ever. You understand, to be sure, that I speak of Charles Townshend, officially the re-producer of this fatal scheme; whom I cannot even now remember without some degree of sensibility. In truth, Sir, he was the delight and ornament of this house, and the charm of every private society which he honoured with his presence. Perhaps there never arose in this country, nor in any country, a man of a more pointed and finished wit; and (where his passions were not concerned) of a more refined, exquisite, and penetrating judg-

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ment. If he had not so great a stock, as some have had who flourished formerly, of knowledge long treasured up, he knew better by far, than any man I ever was acquainted with, how to bring together within a short time, all that was necessary to establish, to illustrate, and to decorate that side of the question he supported. He stated his matter skilfully and powerfully. He particularly excelled in a most luminous explanation, and display of his subject. His style of argument was neither trite and vulgar, nor subtle and abstruse. He hit the house just between wind and water.—And not being troubled with too anxious a zeal for any matter in question, he was never more tedious, or more earnest, than the preconceived opinions, and present temper of his hearers required; to whom he was always in perfect unison. He conformed exactly to the temper of the house; and he seemed to guide, because he was always sure to follow it.

I beg pardon, Sir, if, when I speak of this and of other great men, I appear to digress in saying something of their characters. In this eventful history of the revolutions of America, the characters of such men are of much importance. Great men are the guide-posts and land-marks in the state. The credit of such men at court, or in the nation, is the sole cause of all the publick measures. It would be an invidious thing, (most foreign, I trust, to what you think my disposition) to remark the errours into which the authority of great names has brought the nation, without doing justice at the same time to the great qualities, whence that authority arose. The subject is instructive to those who wish to form themselves on whatever of excellence has gone before them. There are many young members in the house (such of late has been the rapid succession of publick men) who never saw that prodigy Charles Townshend; nor of course know what a ferment he was able to excite in every thing by the violent ebullition of his mixed virtues and failings. For failings he had undoubtedly—many of us remember them; we are this day considering the effect of them. But he had no failings which were not owing to a noble cause; to an ardent, generous, perhaps an immode-

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rate passion for fame; a passion which is the instinct of all great souls. He worshipped that goddess wheresoever she appeared; but he paid his particular devotions to her in her favourite habitation, in her chosen temple, the house of commons. Besides the characters of the individuals that compose our body, it is impossible, Mr. Speaker, not to observe, that this house has a collective character of its own. That character too, however imperfect, is not unamiable. Like all great publick collections of men, you possess a marked love of virtue, and an abhorrence of vice. But among vices, there is none, which the house abhors in the same degree with *obstinacy*. Obstinacy, Sir, is certainly a great vice; and in the changeful state of political affairs it is frequently the cause of great mischief. It happens, however, very unfortunately, that almost the whole line of the great and masculine virtues, constancy, gravity, magnanimity, fortitude, fidelity, and firmness, are closely allied to this disagreeable quality, of which you have so just an abhorrence; and in their excess, all these virtues very easily fall into it. He, who paid such a punctilious attention to all your feelings, certainly took care not to shock them by that vice which is the most disgustful to you.

That fear of displeasing those who ought most to be pleased, betrayed him sometimes into the other extreme. He had voted, and in the year 1765, had been an advocate for the stamp-act. Things and the disposition of men's minds were changed. In short, the stamp-act began to be no favourite in this house. He therefore attended at the private meeting, in which the resolutions moved by a right honourable gentleman were settled; resolutions leading to the repeal. The next day he voted for that repeal; and he would have spoken for it too, if an illness, (not as was then given out, a political) but to my knowledge, a very real illness, had not prevented it.

The very next session, as the fashion of this world passeth away, the repeal began to be in as bad an odour in this house as the stamp-act had been in the session before. To conform to the temper which began to prevail, and to prevail mostly amongst those most in power, he declared, very



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early in the winter, that a revenue must be had out of America. Instantly he was tied down to his engagements by some, who had no objection to such experiments, when made at the cost of persons for whom they had no particular regard. The whole body of courtiers drove him onward. They always talked as if the king stood in a sort of humiliated state, until something of the kind should be done.

Here this extraordinary man, then chancellor of the exchequer, found himself in great straits. To please universally was the object of his life; but to tax and to please, no more than to love and to be wise, is not given to men. However he attempted it. To render the tax palatable to the partisans of American revenue, he made a preamble stating the necessity of such a revenue. To close with the American distinction, this revenue was *external* or port-duty; but again, to soften it to the other party, it was a duty of *supply*. To gratify the *colonists*, it was laid on British manufactures; to satisfy the *merchants of Britain*, the duty was trivial, and (except that on tea, which touched only the devoted East India company) on none of the grand objects of commerce. To counterwork the American contraband, the duty on tea was reduced from a shilling to three-pence. But to secure the favour of those who would tax America, the scene of collection was changed, and, with the rest, it was levied in the colonies. What need I say more? This fine-spun scheme had the usual fate of all exquisite policy. But the original plan of the duties, and the mode of executing that plan, both arose singly and solely from a love of our applause. He was truly the child of the house. He never thought, did, or said any thing, but with a view to you. He every day adapted himself to your disposition; and adjusted himself before it as at a looking-glass.

He had observed (indeed it could not escape him) that several persons, infinitely his inferiours in all respects, had formerly rendered themselves considerable in this house by one method alone. They were a race of men (I hope in God the species is extinct), who, when they rose in their place, no man living could divine, from any known adherence to parties, to opinions, or to principles; from any or-

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der or system in their politicks; or from any sequel or connection in their ideas, what part they were going to take in any debate. It is astonishing how much this uncertainty, especially at critical times, called the attention of all parties on such men. All eyes were fixed on them, all ears open to hear them; each party gaped, and looked alternately for their vote, almost to the end of their speeches. While the house hung in this uncertainty, now the *hear-hims* rose from this side—now they rebellowed from the other; and that party to whom they fell at length from their tremulous and dancing balance, always received them in a tempest of applause. The fortune of such men was a temptation too great to be resisted by one, to whom, a single whiff of incense withheld gave much greater pain, than he received delight, in the clouds of it, which daily rose about him from the prodigal superstition of innumerable admirers. He was a candidate for contradictory honours; and his great aim was to make those agree in admiration of him who never agreed in any thing else.

Hence arose this unfortunate act, the subject of this day's debate; from a disposition which, after making an American revenue to please one, repealed it to please others, and again revived it in hopes of pleasing a third, and of catching something in the ideas of all.

This revenue act of 1767, formed the fourth period of American policy. How we have fared since then—what woeful variety of schemes have been adopted; what enforcing, and what repealing; what bullying, and what submitting; what doing, and undoing; what straining, and what relaxing; what assemblies dissolved for not obeying, and called again without obedience; what troops sent out to quell resistance, and on meeting that resistance, recalled; what shiftings, and changes, and jumblings of all kinds of men at home, which left no possibility of order, consistency, vigour, or even so much as a decent unity of colour in any one publick measure.—It is a tedious, irksome task. My duty may call me to open it out some other time;* on a former occa-

* Resolutions in May 1770.

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sion I tried your temper on a part of it; for the present I shall forbear.

After all these changes and agitations, your immediate situation upon the question on your paper is at length brought to this. You have an act of parliament, stating, that "it is *expedient* to raise a revenue in America." By a partial repeal you annihilated the greatest part of that revenue, which this preamble declares to be so expedient. You have substituted no other in the place of it. A secretary of state has disclaimed, in the king's name, all thoughts of such a substitution in future. The principle of this disclaimer goes to what has been left, as well as what has been repealed. The tax which lingers after its companions, (under a preamble declaring an American revenue expedient, and for the sole purpose of supporting the theory of that preamble) militates with the assurance authentically conveyed to the colonies; and is an exhaustless source of jealousy and animosity. On this state, which I take to be a fair one; not being able to discern any grounds of honour, advantage, peace, or power, for adhering, either to the act or to the preamble, I shall vote for the question which leads to the repeal of both.

If you do not fall in with this motion, then secure something to fight for, consistent in theory and valuable in practice. If you must employ your strength, employ it to uphold you in some honourable right, or some profitable wrong. If you are apprehensive that the concession recommended to you, though proper, should be a means of drawing on you further but unreasonable claims,—why then employ your force in supporting that reasonable concession against those unreasonable demands. You will employ it with more grace; with better effect; and with great probable concurrence of all the quiet and rational people in the provinces; who are now united with, and hurried away by, the violent; having indeed different dispositions, but a common interest. If you apprehend that on a concession you shall be pushed by metaphysical process to the extreme lines, and argued out of your whole authority, my advice is this; when you have recovered your old, your strong, your tenable position, then face about—stop short—do nothing more—reason not at all

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—oppose the ancient policy and practice of the empire, as a rampart against the speculations of innovators on both sides of the question; and you will stand on great, manly, and sure ground. On this solid basis fix your machines, and they will draw worlds towards you.

Your ministers, in their own and his majesty's name, have already adopted the American distinction of internal and external duties. It is a distinction, whatever merit it may have, that was originally moved by the Americans themselves; and I think they will acquiesce in it, if they are not pushed with too much logick and too little sense, in all the consequences. That is, if external taxation be understood, as they and you understand it, when you please, to be not a distinction of geography, but of policy; that it is a power for regulating trade, and not for supporting establishments. The distinction, which is as nothing with regard to right, is of most weighty consideration in practice. Recover your old ground, and your old tranquillity—try it—I am persuaded the Americans will compromise with you. When confidence is once restored, the odious and suspicious *summum jus* will perish of course. The spirit of practicability, of moderation, and mutual convenience, will never call in geometrical exactness as the arbitrator of an amicable settlement. Consult and follow your experience. Let not the long story with which I have exercised your patience, prove fruitless to your interests.

For my part, I should choose (if I could have my wish) that the proposition of the honourable gentleman* for the repeal, could go to America without the attendance of the penal bills. Alone I could almost answer for its success. I cannot be certain of its reception in the bad company it may keep. In such heterogeneous assortments, the most innocent person will lose the effect of his innocency. Though you should send out this angel of peace, yet you are sending out a destroying angel too; and what would be the effect of the conflict of these two adverse spirits, or which would predominate in the end, is what I dare not say:

* Mr. Fuller.

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whether the lenient measures would cause American passion to subside, or the severe would increase its fury—All this is in the hand of Providence; yet now, even now, I should confide in the prevailing virtue, and efficacious operation of lenity, though working in darkness, and in chaos, in the midst of all this unnatural and turbid combination. I should hope it might produce order and beauty in the end.

Let us, Sir, embrace some system or other before we end this session. Do you mean to tax America, and to draw a productive revenue from thence? If you do, speak out: name, fix, ascertain this revenue; settle its quantity; define its objects; provide for its collection; and then fight when you have something to fight for. If you murder—rob; if you kill, take possession: and do not appear in the character of madmen, as well as assassins, violent, vindictive, bloody, and tyrannical, without an object. But may better counsels guide you!

Again, and again, revert to your old principles—seek peace and ensue it—leave America, if she has taxable matter in her, to tax herself. I am not here going into the distinctions of rights, nor attempting to mark their boundaries. I do not enter into these metaphysical distinctions; I hate the very sound of them. Leave the Americans as they anciently stood, and these distinctions, born of our unhappy contest, will die along with it. They and we, and their and our ancestors, have been happy under that system. Let the memory of all actions, in contradiction to that good old mode, on both sides, be extinguished for ever. Be content to bind America by laws of trade; you have always done it. Let this be your reason for binding their trade. Do not burthen them by taxes; you were not used to do so from the beginning. Let this be your reason for not taxing. These are the arguments of states and kingdoms. Leave the rest to the schools; for there only they may be discussed with safety. But if, intemperately, unwisely, fatally, you sophisticate and poison the very source of government, by urging subtle deductions, and consequences odious to those you govern, from the unlimited and illimitable nature of supreme sovereignty, you will teach them by

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these means to call that sovereignty itself in question. When you drive him hard, the boar will surely turn upon the hunters. If that sovereignty and their freedom cannot be reconciled, which will they take? They will cast your sovereignty in your face. No body will be argued into slavery. Sir, let the gentlemen on the other side call forth all their ability; let the best of them get up, and tell me, what one character of liberty the Americans have, and what one brand of slavery they are free from, if they are bound in their property and industry, by all the restraints you can imagine on commerce, and at the same time are made pack-horses of every tax you choose to impose, without the least share in granting them. When they bear the burthens of unlimited monopoly, will you bring them to bear the burthens of unlimited revenue too? The Englishman in America will feel that this is slavery—that it is *legal* slavery, will be no compensation, either to his feelings or his understanding.

A noble lord,* who spoke some time ago, is full of the fire of ingenuous youth; and when he has modelled the ideas of a lively imagination by further experience, he will be an ornament to his country in either house. He has said, that the Americans are our children, and how can they revolt against their parent? He says, that if they are not free in their present state, England is not free; because Manchester, and other considerable places, are not represented. So then, because some towns in England are not represented, America is to have no representative at all. They are "our children;" but when children ask for bread, we are not to give a stone. Is it because the natural resistance of things, and the various mutations of time, hinders our government, or any scheme of government, from being any more than a sort of approximation to the right, is it therefore that the colonies are to recede from it infinitely? When this child of ours wishes to assimilate to its parent, and to reflect with a true filial resemblance the beauteous countenance of British liberty; are we to turn to them the shameful parts

* Lord Carmarthen.

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of our constitution? are we to give them our weakness for their strength? our opprobrium for their glory; and the slough of slavery, which we are not able to work off, to serve them for their freedom?

If this be the case, ask yourselves this question, Will they be content in such a state of slavery? If not, look to the consequences. Reflect how you are to govern a people, who think they ought to be free, and think they are not. Your scheme yields no revenue; it yields nothing but discontent, disorder, disobedience; and such is the state of America, that after wading up to your eyes in blood, you could only end just where you begun; that is, to tax where no revenue is to be found, to—my voice fails me; my inclination indeed carries me no further—all is confusion beyond it.

Well, Sir, I have recovered a little, and before I sit down I must say something to another point with which gentlemen urge us. What is to become of the declaratory act asserting the entireness of British legislative authority, if we abandon the practice of taxation?

For my part I look upon the rights stated in that act, exactly in the manner in which I viewed them on its very first proposition, and which I have often taken the liberty, with great humility, to lay before you. I look, I say, on the imperial rights of Great Britain, and the privileges which the colonists ought to enjoy under these rights, to be just the most reconcilable things in the world. The parliament of Great Britain sits at the head of her extensive empire in two capacities: one as the local legislature of this island, providing for all things at home, immediately, and by no other instrument than the executive power.—The other, and I think her nobler capacity, is what I call her *imperial character;* in which, as from the throne of heaven, she superintends all the several inferiour legislatures, and guides, and controuls them all without annihilating any. As all these provincial legislatures are only co-ordinate to each other, they ought all to be subordinate to her; else they can neither preserve mutual peace, nor hope for mutual justice, nor effectually afford mutual assistance. It is neces-

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sary to coerce the negligent, to restrain the violent, and to aid the weak and deficient, by the overruling plenitude of her power. She is never to intrude into the place of the others, whilst they are equal to the common ends of their institution. But in order to enable parliament to answer all these ends of provident and beneficent superintendence, her powers must be boundless. The gentlemen who think the powers of parliament limited, may please themselves to talk of requisitions. But suppose the requisitions are not obeyed? What! Shall there be no reserved power in the empire, to supply a deficiency which may weaken, divide, and dissipate the whole? We are engaged in war—the secretary of state calls upon the colonies to contribute—some would do it, I think most would cheerfully furnish whatever is demanded—one or two, suppose, hang back, and, easing themselves, let the stress of the draft lie on the others—surely it is proper, that some authority might legally say—"Tax yourselves for the common supply, or parliament will do it for you." This backwardness was, as I am told, actually the case of Pennsylvania for some short time towards the beginning of the last war, owing to some internal dissentions in the colony. But, whether the fact were so, or otherwise, the case is equally to be provided for by a competent sovereign power. But then this ought to be no ordinary power; nor ever used in the first instance. This is what I meant, when I have said at various times, that I consider the power of taxing in parliament as an instrument of empire, and not as a means of supply.

Such, Sir, is my idea of the constitution of the British empire, as distinguished from the constitution of Britain; and on these grounds I think subordination and liberty may be sufficiently reconciled through the whole; whether to serve a refining speculatist, or a factious demagogue, I know not; but enough surely for the ease and happiness of man.

Sir, whilst we held this happy course, we drew more from the colonies than all the impotent violence of despotism ever could extort from them. We did this abundantly in the last war. It has never been once denied—and what reason have



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we to imagine that the colonies would not have proceeded in supplying government as liberally, if you had not stepped in and hindered them from contributing, by interrupting the channel in which their liberality flowed with so strong a course; by attempting to take, instead of being satisfied to receive? Sir William Temple says, that Holland has loaded itself with ten times the impositions which it revolted from Spain, rather than submit to. He says true. Tyranny is a poor provider. It knows neither how to accumulate, nor how to extract.

I charge therefore to this new and unfortunate system the loss not only of peace, of union, and of commerce, but even of revenue, which its friends are contending for.—It is morally certain, that we have lost at least a million of free grants since the peace. I think we have lost a great deal more; and that those who look for a revenue from the provinces, never could have pursued, even in that light, a course more directly repugnant to their purposes.

Now, Sir, I trust I have shewn, first on that narrow ground which the honourable gentleman measured, that you are like to lose nothing by complying with the motion, except what you have lost already. I have shewn afterwards, that in time of peace you flourished in commerce, and when war required it, had sufficient aid from the colonies, while you pursued your ancient policy; that you threw every thing into confusion when you made the stamp act; and that you restored every thing to peace and order when you repealed it. I have shewn that the revival of the system of taxation has produced the very worst effects; and that the partial repeal has produced, not partial good, but universal evil. Let these considerations, founded on facts, not one of which can be denied, bring us back to our reason by the road of our experience.

I cannot, as I have said, answer for mixed measures; but surely this mixture of lenity would give the whole a better chance of success. When you once regain confidence, the way will be clear before you. Then you may enforce the act of navigation when it ought to be enforced. You will yourselves open it where it ought still further to be opened.

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Proceed in what you do, whatever you do, from policy, and not from rancour. Let us act like men, let us act like statesmen. Let us hold some sort of consistent conduct.—It is agreed that a revenue is not to be had in America. If we lose the profit, let us get rid of the odium.

On this business of America, I confess I am serious, even to sadness. I have had but one opinion concerning it since I sat, and before I sat in parliament. The noble lord* will, as usual, probably, attribute the part taken by me and my friends in this business, to a desire of getting his places. Let him enjoy this happy and original idea. If I deprived him of it, I should take away most of his wit, and all his argument. But I had rather bear the brunt of all his wit; and indeed blows much heavier, than stand answerable to God for embracing a system that tends to the destruction of some of the very best and fairest of his works. But I know the map of England, as well as the noble lord, or as any other person; and I know that the way I take is not the road to preferment. My excellent and honourable friend under me on the floor,† has trod that road with great toil for upwards of twenty years together. He is not yet arrived at the noble lord's destination. However, the tracks of my worthy friend are those I have ever wished to follow; because I know they lead to honour. Long may we tread the same road together; whoever may accompany us, or whoever may laugh at us on our journey! I honestly and solemnly declare, I have in all seasons adhered to the system of 1766, for no other reason, than that I think it laid deep in your truest interests—and that, by limiting the exercise, it fixes on the firmest foundations, a real, consistent, well-grounded authority in parliament. Until you come back to that system, there will be no peace for England.

* Lord North. † Mr. Dowdeswell.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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